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### Pioneers of the Illawarra - a history of the family of Elias Organ in Wollongong, 1839-1869

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## Pioneers of the Illawarra - a history of the family of Elias Organ in Wollongong, 1839-1869

### Abstract

This history deals with the life and times of members of the Organ family who settled in the Illawarra region in 1839. The account is based on official government records and newspaper accounts. Unlike other such histories no core of personal memorabilia including letters, documents or artifacts survives, upon which a more personal account can be constructed. Some personal reminiscences dictated by members of the family in the 1920s and '30s have been used, however they are sketchy and were only used to indicate a line of research. This detailed study focuses on the circumstances of the Organ family during the period 1839-1869.

### Disciplines

Arts and Humanities | Social and Behavioral Sciences

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# Pioneers of the Illawarra

## A History of the Family of Elias Organ in Wollongong

1839 - 1869

Michael Organ

Including an appendix by Robert Hardy

1984

**PIONEERS OF THE ILLAWARRA**

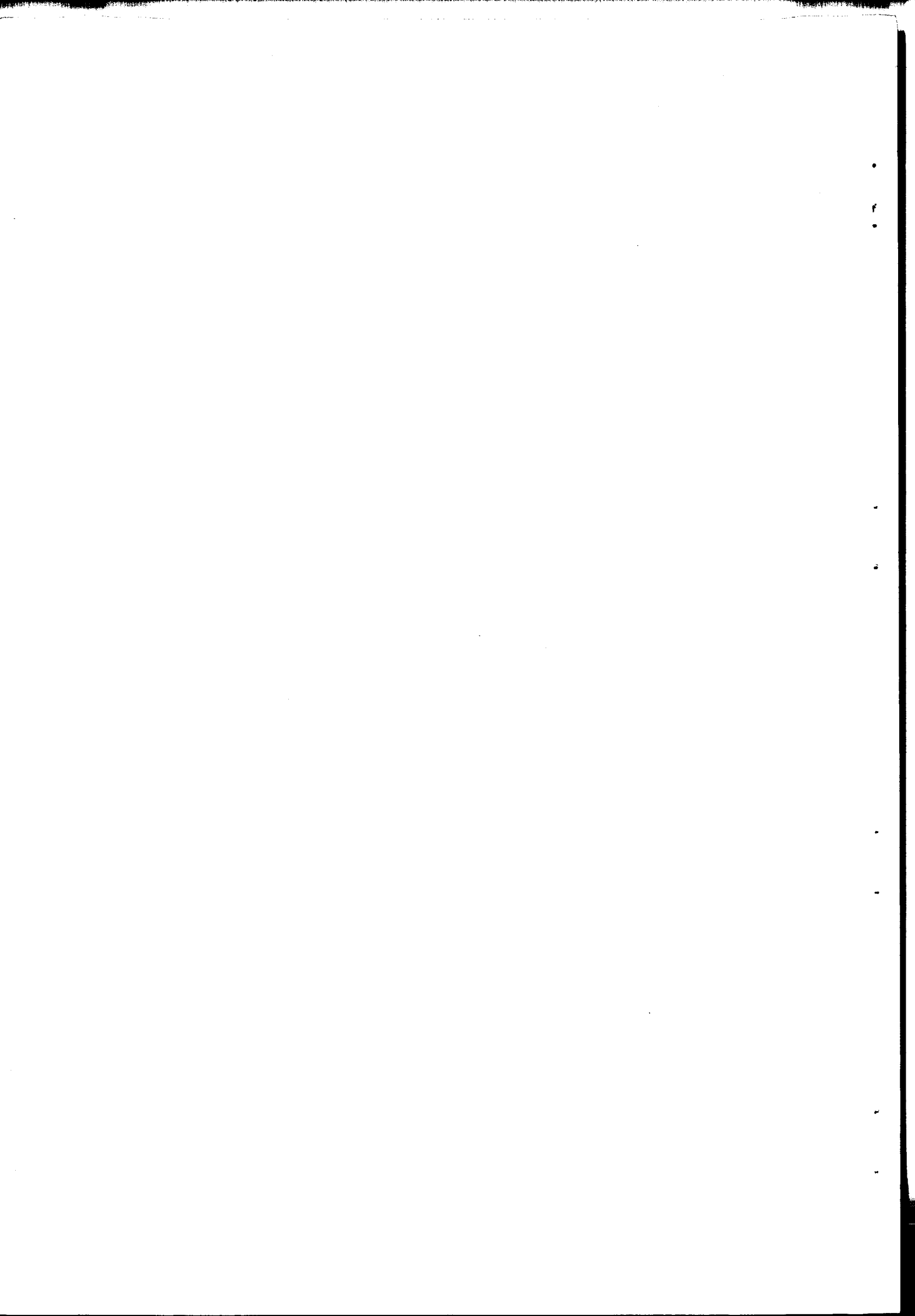
**A HISTORY OF THE FAMILY OF ELIAS ORGAN  
IN WOLLONGONG, 1839-1869**

Compiled by Michael Organ and Robert Hardy

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1984



## INTRODUCTION

This family history deals with the life and times of members of the Organ family who settled in the Illawarra region in 1839 and whose descendents remain there to this day. The text is based almost entirely on official government records and newspaper accounts. Unlike other family histories no core of personal memorabilia such as letters, documents or artifacts survives, upon which a more personal account can be constructed. Some personal reminiscences dictated by members of the family in the 1920s and '30s have been used, however they are sketchy and were only used to indicate a line of research.

I started to compile this history in November 1983, using Pioneer Origins by Kerrie Alexander, and a 2-page Organ family reunion outline, as my only guides. My first objective was to gather all the information which other members of the family had already collected. After only a few weeks of enquiries and phone calls I realized that to complete a history of the Organ family and all its descendents from 1839 to the present day would be a mammoth task. I quickly decided on three parameters which would dictate my research direction:

1. I would deal with only those descendents possessing the Organ name or members of the family of Elias and Elizabeth Organ.
2. I would also confine myself to the Illawarra region as far as possible.
3. This history would span the era 1839 to 1869, i.e., from the arrival of Elias and Elizabeth Organ in Australia to the death of Elizabeth in 1869.

The history as written has basically adhered to those parameters, though examples can be found where I have gone outside them, for example, in detailing the military careers of William and Thomas Organ between 1835 and 1840.

If this history appears sterile and impersonal it is for the reasons outlined, i.e., that no first-hand account of the family of Elias and Elizabeth Organ survives and most official records are just that - official and impersonal. However the fact remains that if not for those official records my forebears would be lost forever in time.

I am no historian, nor am I a writer with a talent for turning a phrase. I am simply someone with a passion for finding out about my forebears. Once that passion grabs you it can be all encompassing. The joys of finding a lost will, a lost member of the family or some insignificant personal detail in an old newspaper, can be great. However those joys can cost dearly for genealogy is probably 90% hard work and 10% enjoying your findings. A genealogist's work is never done - there is always a new area to study, a new question to answer or an old belief to be updated.

The following pages were researched and written in 12 months with the help of many people and as a result of my wanting to know the answer to the question, "What were they really like?" I know I have found part of the answer.

P.S. As I am a descendent of William, son of Elias, this history will contain some bias towards the life of William Organ. I apologise for that to other branches of the family.

*M. Organ*

Michael Organ  
25 October 1984

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all those people who helped me in compiling this family history. First of all I would like to thank Kevin Organ who sparked my initial enthusiasm, and Mrs Rosalind Mayo-Ramsey who, through her own enthusiasm, greatly encouraged me in my initial efforts to put pen to paper and also contact other members of the family engaged in research. Special thanks must go to Mrs Shirley Richards and Mr Robert Hardy who freely supplied their time and their wealth of genealogical knowledge. They filled in many gaps in different branches of the Organ family tree and supplied much background information.

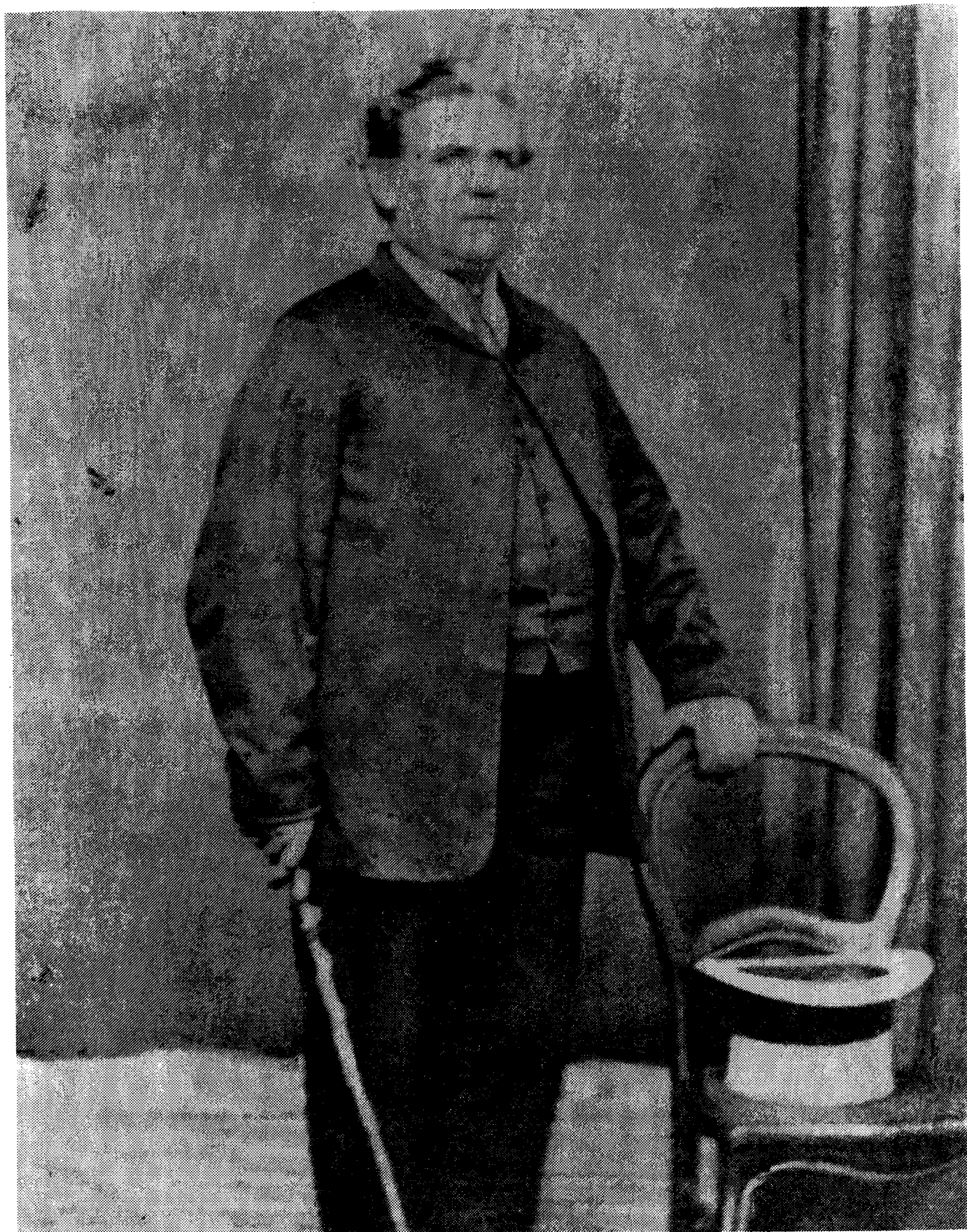
Special thanks also to Lynne Hutton who typed the manuscript and bore with me through the many changes.

Finally I would like to thank Albert Eric Organ (my Grandfather) who, though he died in 1977, had a profound influence on the whole family. My only regret is that he is not alive today to share this history, and his own memories of seventy years in the Bulli district, with us. It is to GRANDPOP that I dedicate this book.

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WILLIAM ORGAN SON OF ELIAS & ELIZABETH

## CHAPTER 1

## FROM WHENCE THEY CAME

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ORGAN FAMILYIN THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE REGION OF ENGLAND

By Robert Hardy

The Lower Severn Valley constitutes one of the three major divisions of Gloucestershire - Forest, Vale and Cotswold. Where the valley widens, below Gloucester, it forms the distinctive lowland of the Vale of Berkeley.

It is impossible to say when the first settlers came to the Vale, or who they were. Lying as it does on the margins of the Severn estuary, one of the major western routeways for traders, settlers and cultural influences, the area probably received numerous waves of people and ideas.

Before the Roman invasion it appears that the Severn was used as a major trading route from Spain, the Mediterranean and Ireland to Britain.

It seems probable that the Romans set up a station at Berkeley for their crossing of the Severn and a town of some sorts was set up in the area of Berkeley.

There is sufficient evidence that Berkeley and the region became a place of some importance in Saxon times. There are records of Danish raiding parties being thwarted in the Berkeley region while Berkeley Abbey was one of the substantial church land owners in Gloucestershire. At the time of the Conquest the land reverted to the Crown and was farmed out to Earl Godwin whose wife lived, at least for a time, at Berkeley. After his fall from grace these estates passed to Roger de Dursley who adopted the surname of Berkeley.<sup>1</sup>

North Nibley, a small village nearby, is found central to the larger town of Dursley to the north, Berkeley and its castle to the west and Wotton-under-Edge to the south-east. Further to the south runs the road to Bristol and Bath. All around are the rolling hills of the Cotswolds.

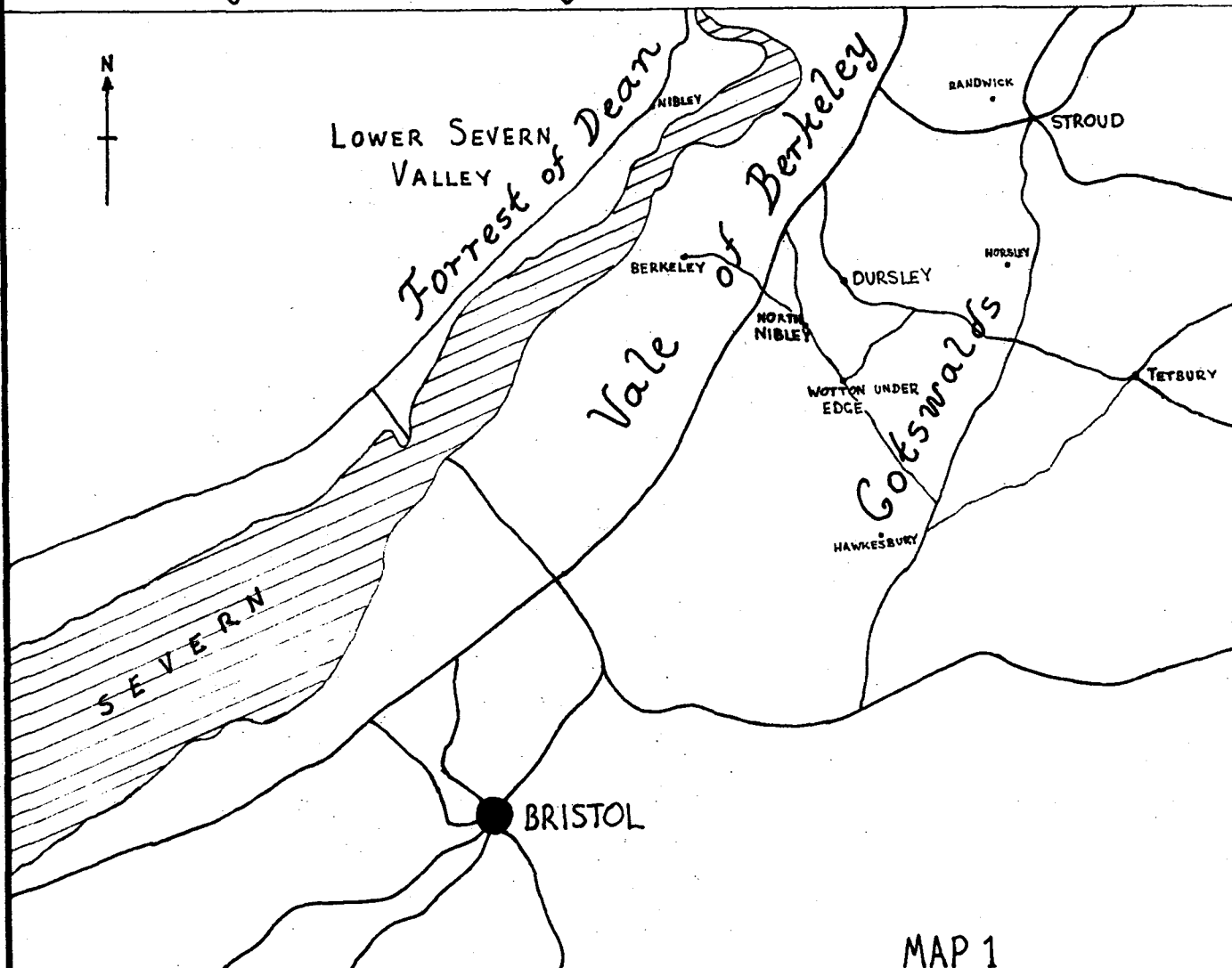
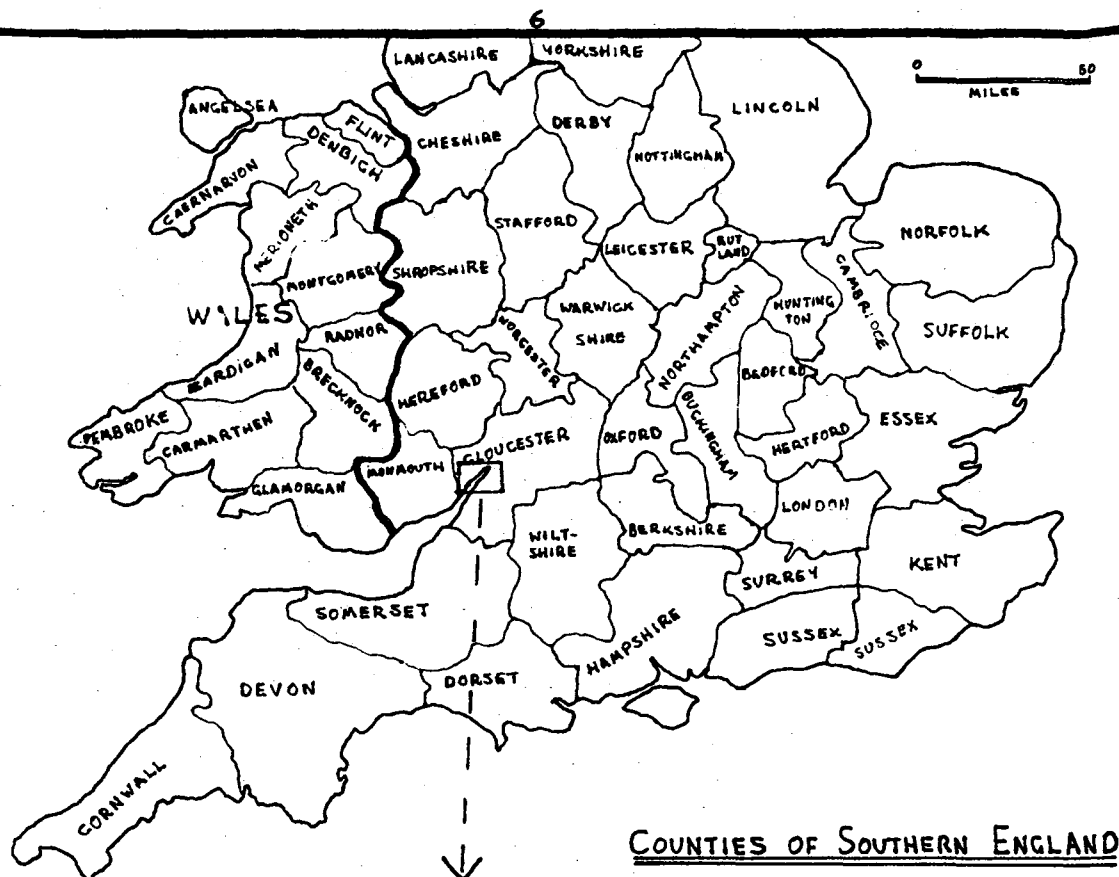
North Nibley lies on the Doverle Brook which flows through Nibley to join the Little Avon River and then onto the Severn. If you stand on the rise of St Thomas' churchyard you can look down to the flat lands of Berkeley and onto the Severn River.

In the early nineteenth century there were seven fulling mills on the waterway that flows through Nibley, thus not only farming but the production of woollen cloth was important in the homes (cottage industry) or in the mills driven by water power.

Many wills of the period state, "my weaving loom is bequeathed" usually to the eldest son, while a "shepe apeece" to each grandchild was quite common.

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1. "Berkeley - Gloucestershire", J.E. Gethyn-Jones, 1971.



MAP 1

RELEVANT GLOUCESTER TOWNS IN ORGAN FAMILY HISTORY

There was quite a lot of duality of occupation, with some aspect of cloth manufacture as well as other sources of income, e.g., shoemaking, husbandman, carpenter, tailor, etc.

Many parents keen to assure their offspring of a secure living apprenticed their children to a tradesperson to learn a trade. These parents had to purchase the apprenticeship while the apprentice had to live with the tradesperson until the apprenticeship was completed, sometimes in a nearby town or village.

During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries the cloth manufacturing industry flourished while the resistance of the Gloucestershire clothiers and their workers to industrialization and power machines led to poor competitiveness with the rival cloth areas of the North of England and during the Nineteenth Century disastrous closures became frequent.<sup>2</sup>

The village of North Nibley was no exception to the many villages and towns of Gloucestershire that offered a chance at basic education to the children of the villagers if they could afford the small amount asked. A Dame School had been set up quite early in the story of North Nibley where children learnt Reading, Writing and Arithmetic and of course Catechism. It is interesting to note that there were even larger schools in operation in the area around.

1384 saw the foundation charter of Katherine, Lady Berkeley's Grammar School at Wotton-under-Edge, said to be the earliest founded by a woman.<sup>3</sup>

On the outskirts of North Nibley can be found a monument to William Tyndale, the English religious reformer and translator of the Bible into the English language, who was executed in 1536 for heresy.

We find many references to the name of Organ in the library at Gloucester which point to an association of the family to the region of Berkeley over many centuries.

The name itself has many meanings:  
ODHRGAN, the Celtic word for the pale or sallow one;  
ORGANER and ORGER, the Old French for musician, organist or organmaker.

I am told by oral history from my grandmother that the name is Danish in origin and the Organs were descendants of a Danish family in Gloucestershire.

The first references to Organ is in 1292 when Richard Organ is mentioned in land assessments of Berkeley as a landowner and officer of Berkeley Castle. He is also mentioned as a juror in the case of Sir John de Bohun's will.

- 
2. Transactions - B.G.A.S.
  3. Transactions - B.G.A.S.

In 1372, John Organ of Berkeley supported the cause of Edward III, subsidising his army and receiving Harescombe as his estate from the grateful King.

Thomas Organ, in 1504 was granted the estate of Brookthorpe and Harescombe.

In the same year we find Henry Organ, landed noble of the Berkeley district witness to the will of the Lady of Berkeley.

Richard Organ, proctor of the Church of St Swithun, Brookthorpe, was given land and a house called Church House in 1532.

In 1584, Simon Organ of Brookthorpe, paid a levy of two thousand pounds as expenses for 1,500 footsoldiers to Queen Elizabeth to assist in England's defence against the Armada.

In 1596, William Organ is listed as landowner of Brookthorpe and Berkeley.<sup>4</sup>

The first recorded entry in the Parish Register of the Church of St Thomas at North Nibley states:

"Maurice Organ, son of William Organ of Berkeley married Sarah Lane of Breadstone, June 1657."

Other entries include:

"John Organ, son of William Organ of Berkeley married Mary Hayward 1659."

"Maurice, son of Maurice and Sarah Organ of Berkeley baptised on the 1st November, 1659."

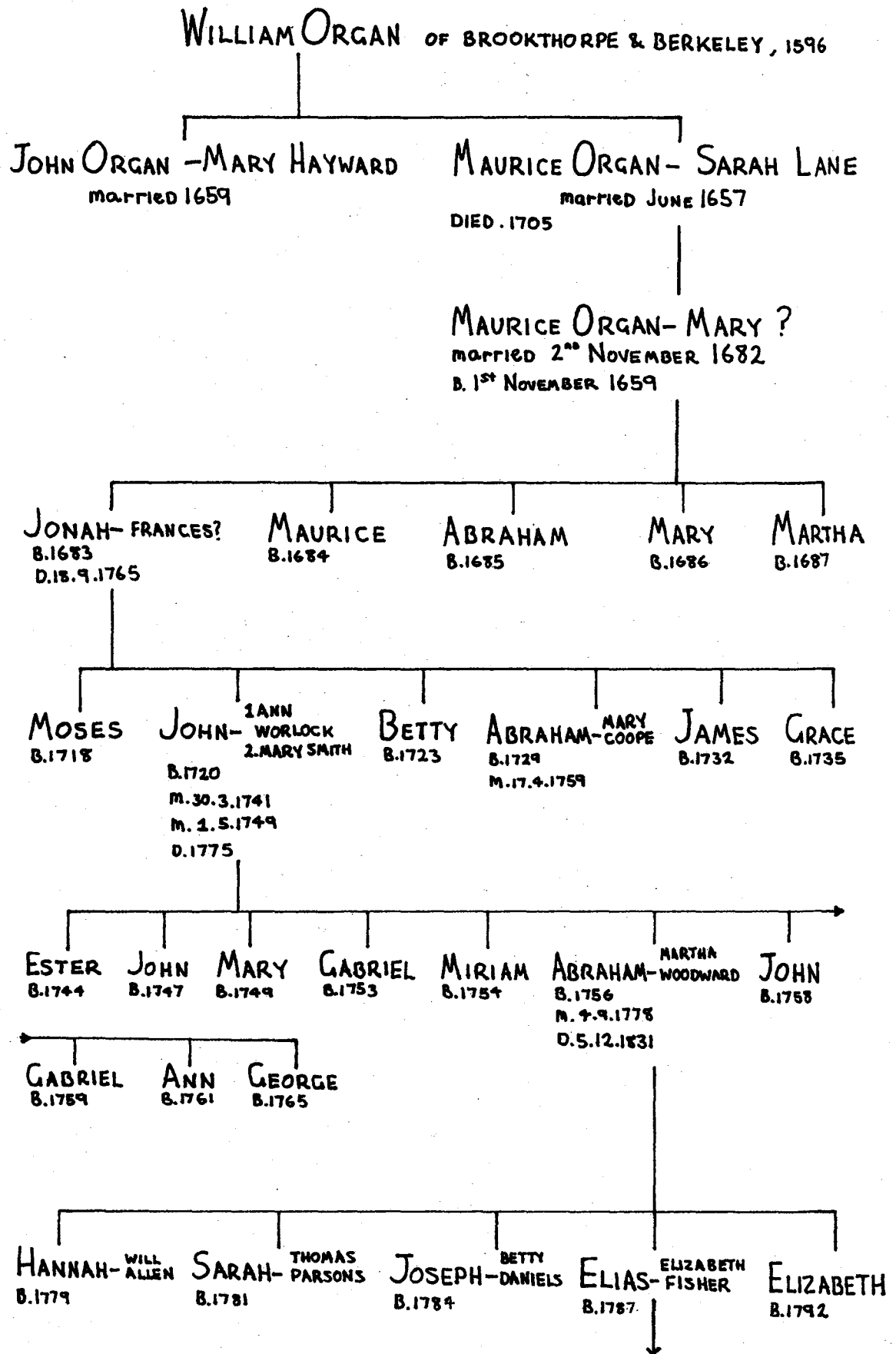
"Maurice Organ, husband of Sarah buried, 1705."<sup>5</sup>

We then find a Maurice Organ marrying a Mary at the church on the 2nd November 1682. Probably this is the same Maurice, son of Maurice and Sarah as no other Maurice appears on the Register for that area. The children listed to this Maurice and Mary Organ are:

"Jonah, 1683, Maurice 1684, Abraham 1685, Mary 1686 and Martha 1687."

Jonah of this family married Frances. I could find no record of their marriage but their children's baptisms are recorded in the Church Register as follows: Moses 1718, John 1720, Betty 1723, Abraham 1729, James 1732, Grace 1735. Frances Organ, Wife of Jonas (Jonah) Organ was buried on the 19th May, 1754. Jonas Organ, Ye Elder was buried on the 18th September 1765.

- 
4. Gloucester Library Archives, Gloucester.
  5. Parish Records, St. Thomas, North Nibley.



FAMILY GROUP CHART NUMBER 1

Of the family of Jonas (Jonah) and Frances Organ, John married Ann Worlock on the 30th March 1741 (no other details given). Abraham Organ married Mary Coope on the 17th April 1759 and gave his occupation as fuller.

John has a short marriage with Ann, who died leaving him with an infant son and two daughters on the 19th January 1747. The baby son died one year later.

John married again to Mary Smith of North Nibley on the 1st May 1749. Three children followed:

Mary - baptised 9th February 1750  
 Gabriel - baptised 31st May 1753 (lived only four months)  
 Miriam - baptised 15th September 1754.

Then we find the baptismal record for Abraham, son of John and Mary Organ for the 22nd May 1756.

John - baptised 10th October 1758  
 Gabriel - baptised 9th December 1759  
 Ann - baptised 22nd November 1761  
 George - baptised 9th June 1765.

We know no more of the Abraham of the family of John and Mary Organ until the Register entry,

"Abraham Organ of the Parish of North Nibley, labourer in the weaving industry married Martha Woodward on the 4th October 1788. By the Rev Samuel Hayward, witnessed by Samuel Woodward."<sup>6</sup>

Soon we find baptismal records for their children in the Register of St Thomas', North Nibley.

Hannah, 4th July, 1779, later married William Allen at North Nibley  
 Sarah, 23rd December 1781, later married Thomas Parsons at North Nibley  
 Joseph, 5th September 1784, later married Betty Daniels at North Nibley  
 Elias, 3rd April 1787, later married Betty Fisher at Dursley  
 Elizabeth, 21st October, 1792.<sup>6</sup>

Little is known of Abraham and Martha's movements but we may suppose that they remained in the Parish of St Thomas', North Nibley as their daughters were married in this parish.

It is Elias Organ, son of Abraham Organ, who was to travel to Australia in 1839 with most of his family. We know that Elias was residing in the Parish of St James the Great, Dursley, when he married Elizabeth (Betty) Fisher on the 10th February, 1806. Perhaps this is where he was working or completing his apprenticeship, as he was only nineteen years of age and working as a carpenter.<sup>7</sup>

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6. Parish Records, St Thomas, North Nibley.  
 7. Dursley Transcripts, St. James the Great.

Elias on the shipping records of the "Bussorah Merchant" in 1839 gave his father's occupation as farmer of Dursley. (Again, duality of occupation.)

We know that Abraham's daughter Sarah Parsons was living at Whittenandrews, Wotton-under-Edge where her husband worked as a mason and we find Abraham dying and being buried at Wotton-under-Edge on the 5th December, 1831 at the age of 75 years. Perhaps he lived with his daughter in his last years.

The story returns to Dursley, which was quite a busy marketing town in the period of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries, where we find Elias Organ residing and working at the time of his marriage to Elizabeth Fisher, daughter of Thomas Fisher, wireworker, of Dursley and his wife Hannah, (née Stokes). The Dursley Transcripts for St James the Great state,

"10th February 1806, Elius Organ and Betty Fisher married.  
1st February 1807 Thomas, son of Elias and Elizabeth Organ baptised.  
25th February 1808 Thomas, son of Elias and Elizabeth Organ buried.  
11th December 1808 George, son of Elias and Elizabeth Organ baptised.  
2nd September 1810 William, son of Elias and Elizabeth Organ baptised.  
13th August 1811 George, son of Elias and Elizabeth Organ buried.  
19th July 1812 George, son of Elias and Elizabeth Organ baptised."

Here the transcripts for the Organ Family cease at this Church.

In 1784 the Calvinist Methodists set up the Dursley Society and George Whitefield, disciple of the Wesleys set up tabernacles in Bristol, Kingswood, Rodborough, Dursley, Wotton-under-edge, North Nibley, Frampton-on-Severn, Stonehouse and Ruscombe.<sup>8</sup>

We know that other children followed and we can only suggest that the family at this stage became Non-conformists and that the remainder of the baptisms were carried out in the Wesleyan chapel at Dursley. We know that the family was Wesleyan at the time of their departure for New South Wales as shown on the shipping records.

No marriages were allowed within the Wesleyan Church until 1837 but baptisms and burials were permitted.

The other children we know of not mentioned in Church records, are:

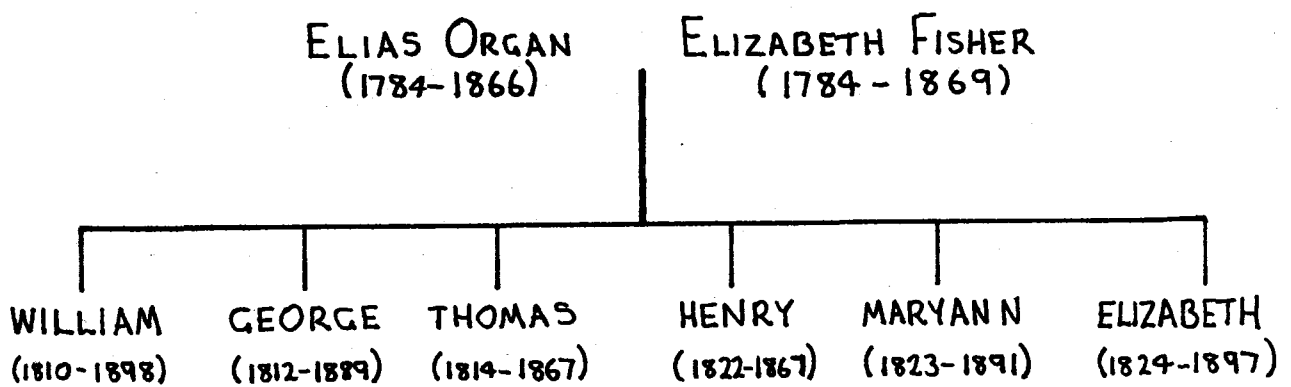
Thomas Fisher born 1814.  
Mary Ann born 1821  
Henry born 1822  
Eliza both 7th August, 1824.<sup>9</sup>

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8. Church Records of Non-conformists.

9. Shipping Records, "Bussorah Merchant", 1839.





ORGAN FAMILY TREE  
FAMILY GROUP CHART NUMBER 2

Here we have documented eight children, six who survived and came to New South Wales, leaving fourteen unaccounted for if we believe the information on both Elias and Elizabeth's death certificates which state that they had 22-23 children all told.

Certainly we know that Elias and Elizabeth Organ left Dursley and travelled to New South Wales and had six surviving children. One can only surmise that they lost many children at birth or they died during childhood, but certainly a remarkable feat for one family - twenty-two children.

It is known that conditions in England were bad in the early Nineteenth century, industrialization had caused much unemployment, winters had been bad and severe, while diseases like tuberculosis were rife due to the crowded factory towns. Poor sanitation meant that typhoid, paralysis and many other diseases may have made the prospect of a new land sound attractive. When the opportunity arose why not a new land?



## CHAPTER 2

### WILLIAM AND THOMAS ORGAN

#### THEIR MILITARY CAREERS 1830-40

William and Thomas Organ were the sons of Elias Organ and Elizabeth Fisher of Dursley, Gloucestershire, England (see Family Group Chart 1). William Organ was born on 10th July 1810 at Dursley and Thomas Organ was born on 13th March 1814, also at Dursley. Both were educated in basic reading and writing at their local school. Not much is known about the early life of William and Thomas but according to a letter written by one of William's grandsons, Arthur F.E. Organ:<sup>1</sup>

"Before joining the army he [William] was four years in the navy, three of which were spent on His Majesty's Ship, The Royal George, the largest ship in the British navy at that time. During a fight with a pirate in the Mediterranean which lasted six hours, he received a nasty gash on the arm from a cutlass."

William's sword from his time in the navy is still in family hands in Australia. There is also some information revealed in William's death notice in The Illawarra Mercury:<sup>2</sup>

"He was connected with the navy in his early days, and in the course of that experience an elopement with an admiral's daughter [Eliza Best] was accomplished by himself and that young lady."

The elopement mentioned was between William and Eliza Best. They were married on 1st May 1830 at St. Andrews Church, Plymouth, Devon by the Reverend James Boulter.<sup>3</sup> William was 19 years old at the time and the marriage certificate lists him as a Sergeant in the Royal Marines. If this is true then it is possible that he was a non-commissioned officer or had undergone some type of formal training within the Marines in order to attain the rank of Sergeant. We do not know whether William's four years in the navy were spent before, during, or after his marriage to Eliza. The only information we have on William's whereabouts from 1830 to 1835 is revealed in Arthur Organ's letter, and from the knowledge that he fathered two children during this time, those two being:

- (i) William Henry Organ, born 5th July 1832 at Gloucestershire, England; and
- (ii) Sarah Emily Organ, born 1st July 1834 at Essex, England.<sup>4</sup>

As a member of the Royal Marines, William would obviously have travelled around England or been at sea quite often and undoubtedly.

- 
1. Letter written c.1930.
  2. Illawarra Mercury, Tuesday, August 9, 1898, p.ii.
  3. Actual marriage certificate owned by Mrs Del. Hart.
  4. Based on information contained in Sarah's death certificate.

his young bride Eliza and their children would have followed him whenever possible.

It is not yet known when William left the Royal Marines, however the next we hear of him is when he, along with his brother Thomas, enlisted for the 28th Regiment of Foot at Gloucester.<sup>5</sup>

Military records conflict concerning the enlistment details of William and Thomas. Most have Thomas enlisting at Chatham on 4th December 1834. However in William's case the records state the following alternatives:

- (i) William Organ enlisted at Gloucester on 4th December 1834 and joined at the Bristol headquarters on 1st February 1835.
- (ii) William Organ enlisted at Bristol on 16th January 1835.

The muster rolls and pay lists state that as of 30 June 1835 William and Thomas had been enlisted for 199 days, but 140 of those days had been spent on pass or furlough so they only received 54 days pay though they had been officially registered as members of the 28th as from 14 December 1834. Whatever the true circumstances are - by 1st February 1835 William and Thomas Organ were serving as privates in the 28th Regiment of Foot under Colonel the Honourable, Sir Edward Paget. Upon enlistment the following details were supplied: Thomas was 5 feet 7½ inches and aged 19 years 7 months. His Army number was 1077 and his profession was given as Carpenter. William was 5 feet 7½ inches and aged 20 years (he was actually over 24 years old). His army number was 1080, voucher number 233, issued by the local Bristol Army recruiting centre. No mention was made of his next of kin or wife and family. He stated his trade as Cordwainer, i.e., a shoemaker, or a worker in leather. It is not known whether he learnt this trade during his time in the Royal Marines as an apprentice, or while back home in Dursley - however it was to stand him in good stead for the rest of his life.

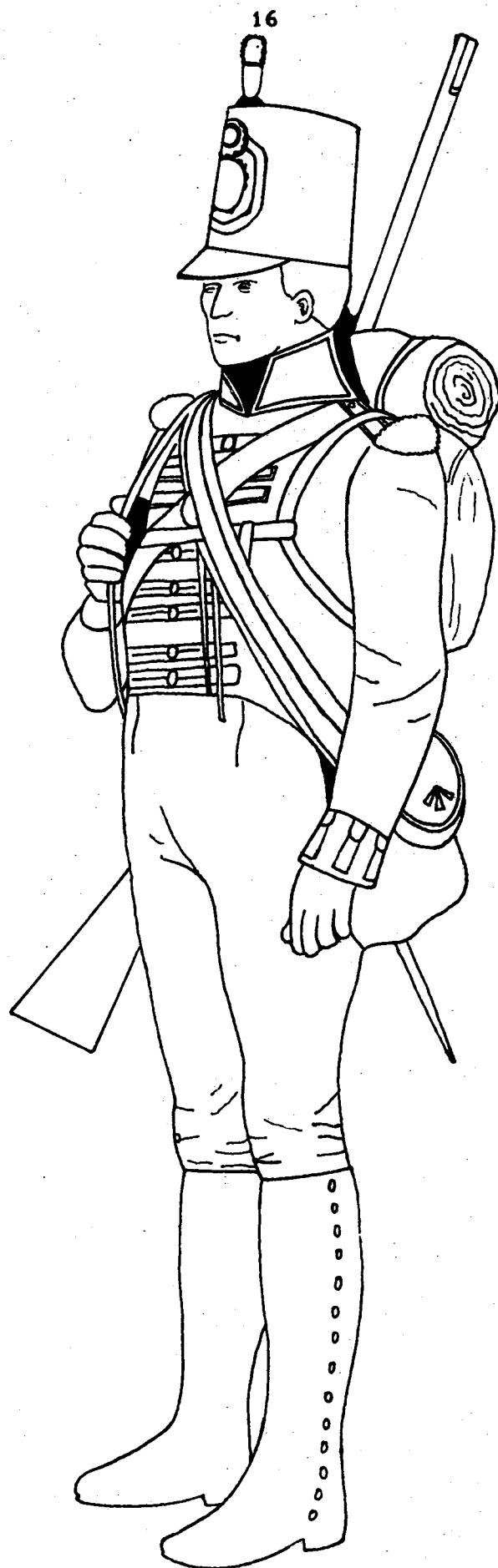
What caused a man like William, a Sergeant in the Royal Marines and with a distinguished career behind him, to join the regular army - an army composed of mostly lower class unemployed men simply looking for a regular meal? It is possible that William and Thomas joined the 28th for the sole reason that its next assignment was to act as guard on convict ships bound for the colony of New South Wales.

Whatever the reasons, by 1st February 1835, William and Thomas Organ were stationed together at Chatham, undergoing basic training. William and Thomas were to stay together for the majority of their time as members of the 28th. Following basic training they were placed on guard duty in preparation for their voyage to NSW.

Four months later, on the 30th May 1835, they left Chatham and England for Dublin, Ireland, to board the 553 ton LADY McNAUGHTON under Captain G. Hustwicke. It was in Dublin that their military duties were to begin for they were to take charge of an assignment of convicts (Irish rebels) bound for the penal settlement of New South Wales. At Dublin the Lady McNaughton took on 300 male convicts under

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5. Military records kept at the Public Records Office, Kew, England and also on Joint Copying Project microfilm at the Mitchell Library, Sydney. Information compiled by Mrs Shirley Richards et al.



A Private of the 28th (North Gloucestershire) Regiment of Foot

the superintendence of George E. Forman Esq., Surgeon, Royal Navy. The guard comprised Lieutenant Trapand, Ensign Baumgartner and 29 rank and file, including Privates William and Thomas Organ, all of the 28th Regiment of Foot. Also on board were the wives and families of the guard consisting of 8 women and 12 children.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately the shipping records for the voyage only give details of the convicts and paying passengers on board - no details are given of the crew, the military guard, or their families. We do not know whether William's wife Eliza and their two children William Henry and Sarah Emily came out with him, however we can assume that they all left England together. On board the Lady McNaughton for this voyage there would have been almost 350 people, with most of the 300 prisoners locked below decks for the duration of the voyage. Conditions must have been atrocious for everyone on board - many thought themselves lucky to survive the voyage. The Lady McNaughton left Dublin on the 23rd June 1835 and sailed back to England to receive her final orders. She left England finally on the 29th July 1835 on her journey to New South Wales via the Cape of Good Hope. She arrived at Sydney Cove on Monday 26th October 1835 after a voyage of almost three months. This was a good time for such a voyage, however it must have seemed like forever for those on board. Three months to travel from England to Australia, and today people complain about jet-lag for a similar trip by plane taking less than two days! How times have changed.

LIFE IN THE 28TH REGIMENT OF FOOT<sup>7</sup>

The men making up the rank and file of the 28th at the time of William and Thomas' enlistment were often destitute or dissatisfied labourers forced to enlist due to unemployment or personal misfortune. Those who didn't enlist invariably ended up on the other side of the law as so-called 'convicts', in their struggle for survival in the overcrowded, depressed conditions present in Britain in the 1830's.

Following their 4 months of basic training at Chatham, Privates William and Thomas Organ then spent 4 months in charge of Irish prisoners on the treacherous sea voyage to New South Wales. Three months of sea-sickness and guard duty must have warmed them to the life facing them in the army. The garrison of New South Wales was thought of by many British military personnel to be the worst country on earth for a soldier. The reasons were many.

The New South Wales garrison in 1835 consisted of three regiments - the 28th, 50th and 80th. The 28th had their headquarters at Parramatta and were dispersed among the iron gangs and stockades of New South Wales. From 1835 to 1841 the 28th Regiment had sailed from Chatham aboard 23 different vessels and was not united until 1841. In 1842 the 28th was sent to fight in India. Initially the officers of the 28th were apparently less disgusted with their posting to New South Wales than officers of other regiments sent out previously.

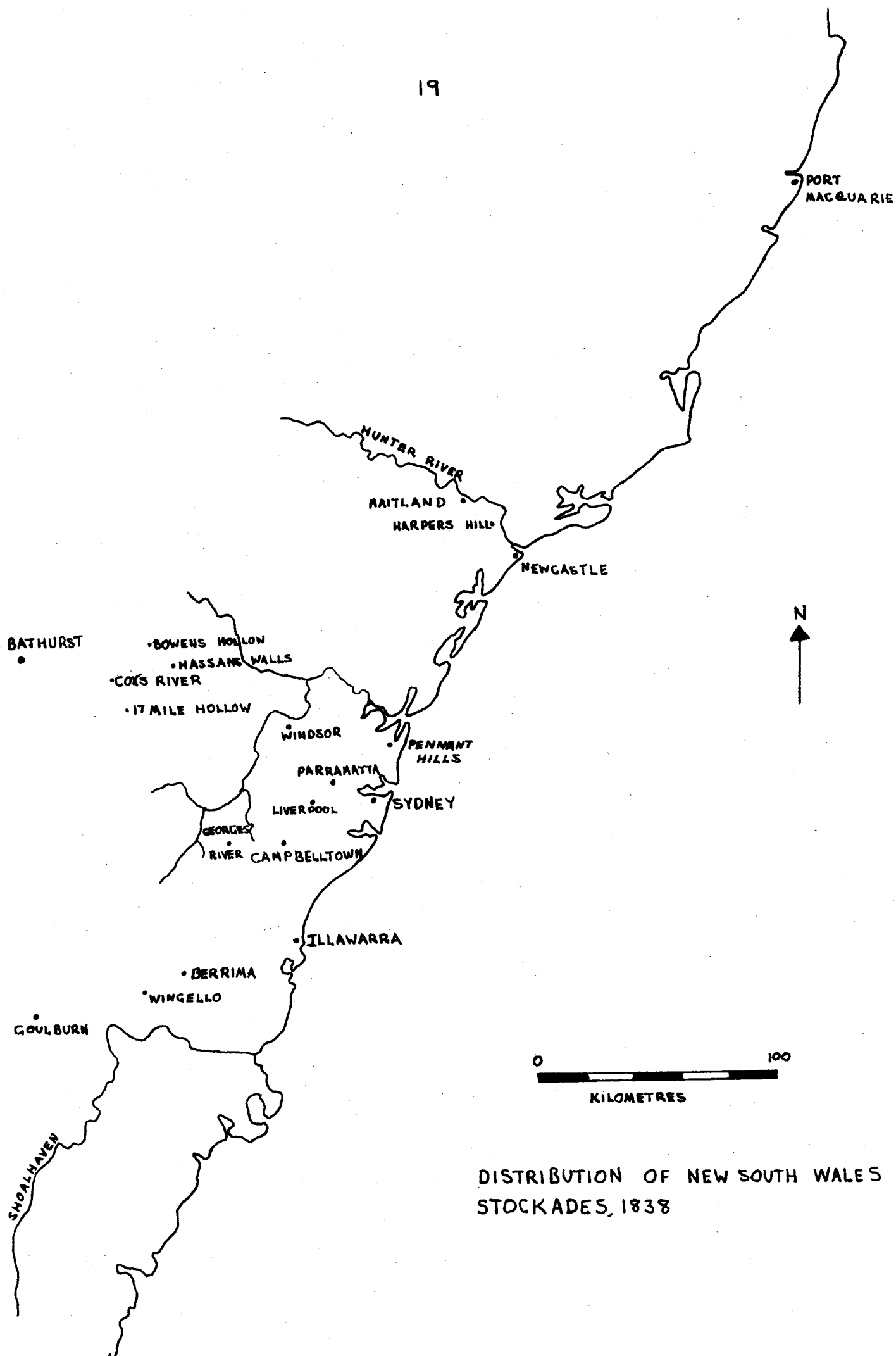
6. Information gathered from Shipping Intelligence columns of the Sydney newspapers (i) Sydney Herald, Thursday, 29th October, 1835  
(ii) The Colonist, Thursday, 29th October, 1835  
(iii) Sydney Monitor, Wednesday, 28th October, 1835
7. Based on 'The 80th Regiment In New South Wales in 1838' by Peter Stanley in 1838-1988 The Push from the Bush.

However the 28th developed a major problem when many of its commissioned officers settled in New South Wales upon arrival, resigning their commissions. This tended to destroy the discipline and efficiency of the regiment, a discipline built up during numerous campaigns and wars. The 28th had fought in Egypt, America, the Pyrenees, the Peninsular war and at the Battle of Waterloo. However as guard to a penal settlement the 28th was no longer a fighting machine. Conditions for the soldier in Australia during the early years of the colony were a far cry from what he had been used to back home in England. The physical conditions such as the heat, unfamiliar terrain, mosquitoes and blowflies; the lack of family ties and a completely new social environment; the sheer isolation of Australia from the rest of the world; and finally the mundane, boring duties of guarding convicts, all worked against the discipline of the soldiers and the regiment as a whole. As one officer lamented for his men in 1838 upon their arrival in New South Wales:

"They were marched to their station without billets, bedding or march money for their food and lodging on the way, sleeping on the ground and carrying their rations. After the first day that horrible nuisance the blow-fly had made the rations one mass of corruption and into the bush they were cast ... Officers found duty dull and from want of other sources of amusement gladly availed themselves of the society of the settlers as fell in their way."

The lack of discipline present and the un-British environment led many of the soldiers and officers to lapse into forms of corruption and depravity for which soldiers were notorious. The conditions which had led to the Rum Rebellion of 1815 were in many ways still present in the colony twenty years later when William and Thomas arrived. For the rank and file soldiers such as William and Thomas, life on the road gangs guarding the prisoners twenty-four hours a day was not much better than the conditions experienced by the prisoners themselves. Many prisoners escaped into the bush to become bushrangers, often being encouraged to take off by the soldiers guarding them. Separated from their commanding officers, many of the soldiers became corrupted through their association with convicts and free settlers. From as early as the days of the First Fleet soldiers and convicts alike realized that Australia was a lucky country and it could provide them with a brighter future than was possible in their native England. They soon realized that transportation was not the terrible punishment it had been devised to be. This caused some bitterness amongst the soldiers. Often convicts assigned to an indulgent master had an easier life than the hard pressed guards. We must also remember that many of these convicts sent out in the 1830's were political prisoners or simple thieves who had been transported for offences such as stealing a loaf of bread, or even swearing. In most instances the soldiers and convicts came from the same working class background. The isolation of the road gangs and stockades often resulted in slackness on the part of the guards and fraternization with the convicts. Wollongong stockade, for example, "remarkable for its cleanliness and order" in 1836 was, by 1838, flagrantly lax and notorious for fraternization between guards and prisoners.





DISTRIBUTION OF NEW SOUTH WALES STOCKADES, 1838

Such then were some of the conditions facing William and Thomas during their years of military service in New South Wales from 1835-40.

Upon the arrival of the Lady McNaughton in Sydney Harbour on 26th October 1835 the prisoners were off-loaded and assigned to either government or private employ. The soldiers of the 28th guard were immediately marched to their headquarters at Parramatta. According to reports<sup>8</sup> there was a heatwave on at the time and two of the soldiers died on the march to Parramatta. According to Arthur F.E. Organ's letter, quoted earlier:

"William was stationed at Newcastle, Port Macquarie and Wollongong after his arrival in Australia and was shot by a bushranger at Port Macquarie while out pigeon shooting and captured the bushranger ... "

Apart from these few reminiscences and fragmented official records nothing much is known concerning William and Thomas' experiences in New South Wales from 1835-40. The official military records, such as pay lists and muster rolls, give their whereabouts according to 3-monthly intervals and reveal a picture of their movements throughout New South Wales as follows:

Following disembarkation and the march to the regimental headquarters at Parramatta they were immediately assigned to the Newcastle garrison and arrived there some time during November 1835. Newcastle was to be their home base, with a few exceptions, for the next two years. Those first few months at Newcastle must have been quite difficult for William and Thomas - young soldiers in a strange country in charge of convict gangs and trying to adjust to a new environment. That first Australian summer of '35-36 was bound to be a shock to their systems.

On the 27th January 1836 Private Thomas Organ was placed in solitary confinement at the Newcastle stockade as punishment for some breach of military discipline. He was to remain in solitary for 37 days - and was released on 3rd March 1836. The pay lists record that during his time in solitary confinement he was given 20 days subsistence rations, which cost the regiment 10/-. This incident is the only recorded blemish upon the military careers of William and Thomas Organ while members of the 28th in Australia. Upon release Thomas returned to his normal soldiering duties. At this time Privates in the 28th were paid 6d. a day.

William and Thomas remained at Newcastle throughout 1836. In January 1837 they visited regimental headquarters at Parramatta briefly then returned to Newcastle. On the 15th May 1837 William and Eliza had a daughter Elizabeth born at Newcastle - the first Organ child to be born in Australia! She was baptized on the 21st May 1837 at the parish of Christchurch, Newcastle. The baptismal certificate records William as a "Private in H.M. 28th Regiment of Foot".

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8. Arthur F.E. Organ's letter of 1930.

During the 3 months July-September 1837 Thomas was stationed at Pennant Hills, west of Sydney, while William remained at Newcastle. However Thomas returned to Newcastle in October and remained there with his brother until they were both transferred to Sydney in December 1837. It was common policy at that time to move soldiers and regiments around throughout the colony in an attempt to lessen the likelihood of corruption which arose due to fraternisation between soldiers and convicts. William and Thomas were shuffled around NSW during their 4½ years as members of the 28th, however for most of that time they were stationed together.

In February 1838 they left Sydney for the garrison at Maitland, 200 km north west of Sydney. They were stationed there until July 1839 when they were removed to Sydney. Their stay at Sydney on this occasion was brief - actually it was more of a transit stop, for a company of the 28th Regiment had been ordered to take up duty at the Illawarra Stockade as from July 1839.

#### THE WRECK OF THE KING WILLIAM

According to Arthur F.E. Organ's letter,<sup>8</sup> concerning William:

"He was also wrecked in the Old King Billy which ran ashore near Newcastle."

The "Old King Billy" was in fact the 84-ton steamer King William, which was wrecked at Oyster Bay, Newcastle, on 2nd July 1839. It was around this time that William and Thomas were being transferred from Maitland to the Illawarra Stockade via Newcastle and Sydney. This led to them being aboard the King William for that particular voyage. Fortunately all the passengers, about 25 in number, and the crew, got to shore in safety without any loss of life. Newspaper reports of the time give the following account of the incident:

"The King William was on her way to Sydney on Monday night after leaving Newcastle harbour at about 3.30 pm that afternoon [1st July 1839]; at 5.30 pm there arose a perfect gale from the S.S.E. with heavy rain. Captain Prescott got her head to wind and stood out to sea till about 7.00 pm, when a link of the funnel shroud broke. The vessel was pitching badly and before the funnel could be secured it came down and fell on the deck, eventually rolling overboard. This resulted in the fires going out so that they could make no further use of the steam. The Captain got canvas on her, disconnected the engines and stood away to the north east. Midnight saw the ship head up S.S.E., but the swell was setting in so strong from the S.E. that they could not clear the shore. They decided to put back to Newcastle. The King William ran into Newcastle about 3 am, Tuesday, 2nd July, and let go both anchors on a rocky bottom under Nobby's Head, but they would not hold due to the increasing wind. She dragged her anchors and drifted until

a quarter before six when she struck a sandy beach. The situation of the steamer had been observed by Mr George Jackson, the Newcastle harbour pilot, who pulled to them in a lifeboat to render assistance and by doing so was the means of saving the lives of the whole of the crew and passengers. Mr Jackson had reached shore by the time the vessel struck and at about 6 a.m. a rope was passed from the vessel to the shore, by means of which all the people escaped. Two infants who were on board were secured in blankets and thrown into the water, from which they were picked up by Mr Jackson's crew. The King William soon went to pieces and when the steamer Tamar passed the spot later that afternoon the only part of the wreck which could be perceived was the ends of the boilers above the water and some portion of her cargo, which had washed up on the beach. Following their rescue the passengers were conveyed over to Newcastle."<sup>9</sup>

We do not know whether Thomas and William's family were also on board, but assuming they were it is possible that the two infants referred to were William's daughters Sarah Emily, aged 5, and Elizabeth, aged 2. William's wife Eliza was 7½ months pregnant at the time. The shipwreck must have been a traumatic experience for them all. It was winter at the time and the immersion in those icy waters may have been the cause of the chill which was to take the life of Eliza just eight months later.

#### WILLIAM AND THOMAS AT THE ILLAWARRA STOCKADE

Prior to July 1839 the military garrison and stockade on the headland at Wollongong harbour had been occupied by a number of Regimental Companies, the most recent (prior to the arrival of the 28th) being a company of the 80th Regiment.

Lady Jane Franklin - the wife of the then Governor of Van Diemen's Land - visited Wollongong in 1839 and recorded the following view on the 12th May of that year, just two months before William and Thomas arrived in Wollongong:

"After our return we went down to the harbour and were overtaken by Captain Plunkett. We walked on the rock under the tongue of land, round to a break in the rock like a ruined wall. We jumped this and crossing back through a natural hole or perforation in the face of the rock we pass under it and find a ladder into a bathing cove where the military officers of the stockade, who were here previous to Captain Plunkett, erected a hut for ladies. Another for gents is over the cliff ... We got out of the cove and

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9. Reconstructed from The Colonist, 5 July 1839; Sydney Monitor, 5 July 1839; Sydney Gazette 7-9 July 1839.

ascended on top of the tongue of land whence there is a pretty view of the top near the shore, with sandy beach, woods, harbour and mountains ... The barracks and huts of the prisoners and military are here. We looked into the huts etc. ... There are about 115 convicts here and about 30 troops of the 80th. Captain Rait is the Commandant. The men are lodged in wooden boxes forming the side of a square on the tongue of land which was the only part Sir Richard Bourke would accept from C.I. Smith. There are five or six of these - no windows - holding 24 each. No light or air but from the iron bars at the top of the door. Men were lying on the bare floors and on bare wooden platforms alone. We were told they were locked in only at night but found them locked in now. No mattresses. Have they none? We asked the soldiers. '- only the sick.' The commanding officer lives 2 miles off in a place where there was a stockade when the road was in the making [near Charcoal Creek]."

Life was indeed harsh for the convicts in Wollongong stockade at that time - forced to work excavating the new harbour basin during the day and sleeping on the floor of the stockade barracks at night. William and Thomas' duties would have been more akin to prison warders than fighting soldiers.

Prior to July 1839 no members of the 28th Regiment had been stationed in the Illawarra region. William and Thomas were members of No.4 Company of the 28th Regiment of Foot which took up its posting at the Illawarra Stockade as of 1st July 1839. The No.4 Company comprised:

Captain:	Frank Adams		
Sergeants:	George Collins and Henry Taylor		
Corporal:	Paul Underwood		
Privates:	George Armstrong	Joseph Gibbs	Thomas Organ
	James Burke	John Hallan	William Organ
	John Cahill	Arthur Hottow	William Rance
	John Campbell	John Howes	Arthur Ryan
	John Cotterell	George William Hughes	
	George Creagh	William Johnstone	Henry Sipsop
	Moses Earl	John McDermott	William Smith
	Timothy Fightly	James McLean	Thomas Sullivan
	John Flanagan	Hugh O'Neal	Lawrence Tosham
	James Gaynor		George Wood

At that time a private's rate of pay was 1/- per day or just over £18 per annum - not a very substantial amount at all, especially for someone like William who had a wife and 3 young children to support. The regular army at that time was not a glamorous, well paid job at all. One of Captain Adams' pay receipts for that time survives and states:

Illawarra 28th October 1839

£165.16.10

Received from Paymaster Benson 28th Regiment the sum of £165.16.10 being the pay of the Non-Commissioned Officers, Drummer and Privates of the No.4 Company from 1st July to 30th September 1839.

Frank Adams  
Captain

Also accompanying No.4 Company to Wollongong were the various wives and families of the soldiers - accommodation had to be found for them at the stockade along with the soldiers and convicts.

Albert Organ, William's son, gave an interesting account of his father's experiences while stationed at Wollongong to the Illawarra Mercury,<sup>10</sup> a section of which follows, as published:

"... Sergeant William Organ, of the 20th Regiment, first came out from England in charge of a number of convicts, and was superintending the construction of the Wollongong Harbour, where the Illawarra Steam Navigation Company's wharf is located ... Mr Organ [i.e., Albert] has a clear recollection of the first work done at Belmore Basin by convict labour, where the I.S.N. Company's boats now berth. This was cut by convict labour out of the solid rock. He can remember the convicts working there, guarded by soldiers, under his father's charge - drilling holes in the rocks and blasting the rock with powder. He remembers one occasion when some convicts escaped, and his father went after them, with one man, out into the dense bush, catching up with them somewhere about Fairy Meadow Public School, and he and his man bringing them back to the stockade ... He remembers his father having charge of the convicts working on the roads, and tells the story of one evening, up near the stockade at Flagstaff Hill, when Mrs Fuller's bread cart was coming up with the supply of bread for the prisoners that the men were that hungry that they mobbed the cart and cleaned out all the bread. Mr Organ states that the treatment received by the prisoners was not as bad as is generally stated or believed. If a prisoner was well behaved he received very good treatment. In such a case the well behaved prisoner had more to fear from bad prisoners than from the keepers. Generally when a man was marked "Good Conduct" he was quickly assigned to some farmer who required a man. Mr Organ tells some stories of the assigned prisoners - how well some were treated and how badly others fared. On the whole he thinks that the assignment of prisoners was for the good of the district and the colony for in a good number of cases prisoners made good when placed under the care of farmers, and there were some good and humane farmers in the district at the time Mr Organ mentions."

10. "Reminiscences of Illawarra" by Old Pioneer, Series 30, published in The Illawarra Mercury, 9th May 1924, p.1, columns 3 & 4.

There are a few inaccuracies in the above account. (i) Albert was born in 1848, and as his father left the army in 1840 he could not have remembered seeing his father superintending the convicts. Albert is obviously remembering the stories his father told him about his times in the army. (ii) William was never a Sergeant in the 20th - he was discharged as a Private in the 28th. William may have been a Sergeant during his time in the Royal Marines.

The Wollongong Stockade in 1839 was situated on the point adjacent to Wollongong Harbour. The first Illawarra garrison had been stationed at Red Point near Port Kembla in the 1820's but it was moved to Wollongong in 1829 when Charles Throsby Smith, at that time supplying food to the garrison, decided to make Wollongong the regional centre. Charles Throsby Smith owned 300 acres at Wollongong and suggested that the garrison be moved there when he was unable to guarantee supplies getting to the soldiers at Red Point due to the number of flooded creeks, and Tom Thumb lagoon, which often swelled and isolated the garrison from Wollongong. A description of the Wollongong Stockade was given by Alexander Stewart in his reminiscences published in the Illawarra Mercury.<sup>11</sup> Alexander Stewart arrived in Wollongong in 1828 as a convict:

"The Crown Settlement [i.e., the Stockade] in the beginning was wholly a canvas one. Then the tradesmen who came down with the soldiers built the courthouse ... Immediately behind it was the watch house or lock-up. It was a small wooden building consisting of three rooms or compartments ... Behind that wooden building stood the cells. Behind the cells, still going east, was the commandant and magistrates residence ... East of the commandant's residence was the soldiers barracks."

It was within these soldiers barracks that William and his family, and Thomas, were to spend a year, along with upwards of 300 convicts.

Another view of Wollongong at this time was expressed by the Honourable Jas. Gormby, M.L.C. also in the Illawarra Mercury:<sup>12</sup>

"On the south of the Wollongong Harbour there is a narrow neck of land projecting into the sea. In 1840 there was a stockade erected on this neck of land and some hundreds of prisoners were confined in the place and were then working to excavate a basin in the solid rocks, to accommodate the coastal vessels when loading and unloading. There was a considerable number of soldiers guarding the prisoners, and sentries constantly marching backwards and forwards outside the stockade to see that the men did not escape."

William and Thomas' duties as members of the guard would have included sentry duty at the stockades at Wollongong and Charcoal Creek,

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11. "Reminiscences of Early Illawarra" by Alexander Stewart, published in the Illawarra Mercury in 1894 and reprinted in 1934.

12. Illawarra Mercury, 4th February 1916.

supervising the convicts working on construction of the new harbour at Wollongong basin, or supervising road gangs working throughout the Illawarra district.

The soldiers lived at the stockade or on the road with their assignments. As has previously been noted, by 1838 there was a lot of fraternization between soldiers and convicts at the Wollongong Stockade. However life was a struggle for most people in Wollongong at that stage, be they soldier, convict or free settler. Conditions were still rather primitive, e.g., there was no secured water supply, most having to be carted from local creeks or Tom Thumb Lagoon. As Alexander Stewart<sup>10</sup> points out, fresh water was a valuable commodity in Wollongong in the early days:

"The soldiers when they came down dug a well on the north side of the town lagoon [now Lang Park]. It was about nine or ten feet deep and there were steps going down into it ... The spring was a very poor one and the water came into the well very slowly. We had to get up in the night to try to get the first water and the competition for it was so keen that many persons had to go without ... The well was supposed to supply the soldiers, the police and others who were about at that time. The water was fresh and good."

Food was supplied by local farmers. However the Wollongong Stockade, along with the whole Illawarra region, was relatively isolated from Sydney and the rest of the colony. The daily steamship communication between Wollongong and Sydney may have helped a little in allaying the feeling of isolation among the people of the Illawarra, but the road to Sydney was still a mere bush track accessible only by horseback. The soldiers, convicts and free settlers of the region all had to work together for the common good. These people were pioneers and their futures were wholly dependent on their own efforts - there were no government handouts in this era. For the reason that they were all on the same basic social level and all in the same struggle for survival it is easy to see why convicts upon their release, soldiers, and free settlers, were able to become part of the one classless society which made Australia such a great nation. It is thanks to these pioneering ancestors of us all that we can call Australia 'the lucky country'.

There was no real class structure present in the early years of Wollongong. Most of the large landowners (there were only a few) lived outside the district and most of the large estates were subdivided in the 1840's. The Illawarra region was composed basically of working class free settlers, emancipists, soldiers and convicts. There were a number of men who saw themselves as 'landed gentry' such as Charles Throsby Smith, the Osbornes and Captain Robert Marsh Westmacott, but they constituted less than 7% of the population based on 1841 census figures. The point being that the Illawarra region offered many opportunities to anyone who wanted to settle there. It had been called "The Garden of New South Wales" as early as 1815, and the beautiful beaches and temperate climate must have been just as attractive to those first settlers as it is to the people of the Illawarra today.



When William and Thomas arrived at Wollongong in July of 1839 the town was beginning to experience its first major influx of population. Wollongong was a prosperous town in the years 1839-41. The population reached a record 825 in March of 1841 and this coincided with good times throughout the colony as a whole. However the boom went bang in 1842 and a depression spread throughout the colony for a number of years. The population of Wollongong fell to 545 in 1846.

William and Thomas arrived in Wollongong at the beginning of the boom, and this may have encouraged them to settle in the region. During this time there was widespread land speculation throughout the colony and in Wollongong town itself. Town allotments changed hands frequently during these years, and many new settlers arrived to take up clearing leases throughout the Illawarra region.

During William's time in the army he attained an unofficial rank of Corporal. This may have been due to his being a conscientious soldier - perhaps his four years in the Royal Marines had instilled in him the proper military discipline. Remember that Thomas, and possibly many other new recruits of the 28th, had only undergone four months basic training at Chatham before they were on the convict transports bound for New South Wales, hardly the right environment for the development of a soldier.

When William arrived in Wollongong he was 28 years old, and had a wife Eliza, then 8-months pregnant, and three young children, William, Sarah and Elizabeth. Thomas was 25 years old and unmarried.

On the 15th August 1839 Maria was born to William and Eliza Organ at the Wollongong Stockade. On the Birth Certificate William states his profession as "Corporal, 28th Regiment", however the pay lists record him as a Private during his time in the 28th until his discharge. Just 3 weeks later, on the 3rd September 1839, William and Thomas' family arrived from England on board the Bussorah Merchant. However following the joy and elation of the re-uniting of the family in Wollongong tragedy was to strike - William's wife Eliza caught a chill and died on 23rd February 1840 at the Stockade. This must have dealt a mighty blow to William for at the time of Eliza's death his own family consisted of a 6-month old baby Maria, and 3 young children aged 1, 4 and 6 years.

One can only feel very sorry for poor Eliza. Her elopement to William, obviously for love, and at a young age, had ended in her death in the soldiers barracks of the Wollongong Stockade, halfway around the world from her home in England. Far away from family and friends Eliza saw her last days pass at Wollongong with her beloved William and their young children. She died at a young age (c.29 years old) and it points to the hardships experienced by all the early pioneers of Australia, especially women and children. They all faced a hard, harsh life both on the journey to, and upon their arrival in, Australia. Eliza's circumstances in being a soldier's wife would not have made things any easier. She followed William throughout England as a young bride while he was in the Royal Marines; she journeyed

WILLIAM ORGAN = ELIZA BEST  
b. 10.7.1810      b. ? 1811  
m. 1.5.1830      m. 1.5.1830  
d. 24.7.1898      d. 23.2.1840

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graph TD; A["WILLIAM ORGAN = ELIZA BEST  
b. 10.7.1810      b. ? 1811  
m. 1.5.1830      m. 1.5.1830  
d. 24.7.1898      d. 23.2.1840"] --- B["WILLIAM HENRY  
b. 5.7.1832"]; A --- C["SARAH EMILY  
b. 1.7.1834"]; A --- D["ELIZABETH  
b. 15.5.1837"]; A --- E["MARIA  
b. 17.8.1839"]
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WILLIAM HENRY	SARAH EMILY	ELIZABETH	MARIA
b. 5.7.1832	b. 1.7.1834	b. 15.5.1837	b. 17.8.1839

with him to Australia on board the Lady McNaughton along with 300 male convicts; and finally she followed him throughout New South Wales while he was a member of the 28th Regiment, only to die 2 months before he was to leave the army and finally settle down to a normal family life in Wollongong. They probably made numerous plans for their future just as any young couple would. Our hearts must go out for someone like Eliza and the family she left behind. Whether she died yesterday or 150 years ago is irrelevant. She deserves to be present in our memories, along with all of our forebears.

Eliza's death may have been one of the reasons William and Thomas decided to leave the army. The arrival of their parents and other members of the family in Wollongong and their decision to settle there, along with the knowledge that the 28th Regiment was to be sent to India to fight, obviously helped William and Thomas make the decision. The life of a soldier in the army in New South Wales at that time was not much better than the plight of the convicts they were guarding. William and Thomas must surely have noticed during their time at Wollongong the opportunity for settling down on a farm or opening a business. The Illawarra and the colony offered them a future, and they considered this a brighter future than that offered by the army. On the 21st March 1840 Captain Frank Adams embarked for England on board the ship *Trusty* and the No.4 Company, 28th Regiment, left the Illawarra Stockade for Regimental Headquarters at Parramatta sometime during March 1840. William and Thomas did not want to leave Wollongong, so they applied to be discharged. Thomas had an extra incentive to leave the army - he had fallen in love with one Honoria McNamara, a local young Irish-Catholic girl from Charcoal Creek (now Unanderra), N.S.W. It is possible that Thomas had met Honoria while he was stationed at the stockade at Charcoal Creek.

For whatever reasons, William and Thomas both received their discharge from the 28th Regiment of Foot at Parramatta on the 1st April 1840 on payment of £20. They both had clear military records. Just over four months later, on the 10th August 1840, Thomas married Honoria McNamara at Wollongong in the rites of the Catholic Church before Father John Rigney.

So endeth the military careers of William and Thomas Organ.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE ORGAN FAMILY IN AUSTRALIA

1839-1841

#### ARRIVAL AND SETTLEMENT

The dawn of a new spring day, Tuesday, 3rd September 1839, was to see the arrival in Sydney Harbour of yet another in the long line of sailing ships bringing bounty immigrants to the colony of New South Wales, a colony which in the 1830's was developing so fast that the supply of convicts from the British prisons could not keep up with the then current demand for labour. As settlement spread beyond the limits of the 13 counties and the population was scattered over a greater area, the need for more labour became acute. The population shortage was solved by phasing out transportation in the late 1830's and introducing bounty immigration. The Organ family were typical bounty immigrants.

That rainy day in the spring of 1839 saw the arrival of the Bussorah Merchant, a 530 ton barque and former convict transport, sailing from Bristol, England and skippered by a Captain Moncrief.<sup>1</sup> On this particular voyage she was carrying 236 Government (Bounty) Immigrants. The Bussorah Merchant had been built at Calcutta in 1818 and during the late 1820's and early 1830's she had been used to bring convicts to Australia. On those voyages she would carry an average of 200 convicts, a guard comprising about 30 men and another 30 men comprising the crew - all told she carried c.260. When the Bussorah Merchant left Bristol in April 1839 she was carrying 236 bounty immigrants and 32 crew. The Bounty Immigrant programme was started to ease Australia's labour shortage problem and also to rid England of its large unemployed population which was quickly becoming a burden on the resources of a country then in the grip of a depression. The British Government saw depopulation as an answer to its problems, and therefore encouraged migration to the colonies.

They specifically encouraged emigration of the working classes, as is pointed out in the following despatch from the British Secretary of State Lord Goderich to Governor Darling, dated 9th January 1831.

"Considering Emigration as a means of relieving the Mother Country, it is quite clear that no such relief can possibly be afforded by the mere removal of Capitalists: that it is the emigration of the unemployed British Labourers, which would be of real and essential service while I think it also appears that this would be the most useful class of Emigrants, even as regards the Colony, from the extreme difficulty which is not complained of in obtaining Labourers, and the competition for the service of Convicts  
... "

Out of this need the Bounty Immigrant programme was formed.

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1. Information based on shipping records in N.S.W. Archives Office and newspaper reports for that time.

Among the 236 bounty immigrants on board the Bussorah Merchant for this particular voyage to New South Wales in 1839 were a number of families from the Gloucestershire region of England. The Bussorah Merchant embarked from Bristol, which was the chief port of the Gloucester region and not far from Dursley. Among those families on board were the Organs, composed of:

- \* Elias Organ, a 49-year old carpenter
  - \* Elizabeth Organ, his wife, also 49 years old, a house servant and their children
  - \* Henry, aged 17, a tailor
  - \* Ann, aged 16, a dressmaker
  - \* Eliza, aged 15, a nursemaid
  - \* George, aged 25, a tailor
- and also George's wife and family including
- \* Maria, his wife, aged 24 years, a dressmaker
  - \* William Henry, their son, aged 7 years
  - \* Emily, their daughter, aged 5 years.

The above particulars for each member of the family were as recorded in the shipping records for that voyage.<sup>3</sup>

The Bussorah Merchant had left Bristol on the 15th April 1839. There was one port of call on the voyage to Port Jackson, namely Simons Bay, Cape of Good Hope, where they arrived on 30th June and stayed for 12 days. They left Simons Bay on the 11th July and arrived at Sydney on the 3rd September, 1839.<sup>4</sup> The voyage had taken 141 days, i.e., almost 5 months. This was an inordinately long time for an England to Australia sea voyage, even in the 1830's, the average journey taking only 3½ months. It had taken the Lady McNaughton 3½ months when it brought William and Thomas out in 1835.

Following their arrival at Port Jackson Elias and the rest of the family travelled to Wollongong to be reunited with their two sons William and Thomas and William's family. William and Thomas Organ had been in Australia since 26th October 1835 as members of the 28th Foot Regiment and at the time of the arrival of the rest of their family in 1839 they were both stationed at the Wollongong Stockade as members of the guard.

What had caused an elderly English couple such as Elias and Elizabeth to pack up their belongings, leave behind their family and friends in England, and head off half way across the world to Australia, which at that time was still seen by the rest of the world as merely a penal settlement? There were undoubtedly many reasons - their particular ones we will never know, but we can hazard a guess at some of the more obvious factors which caused them to make such a journey:

- \* England during the late 1830's was overpopulated and its people undernourished. The British government was encouraging migration

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3. Archives Office Reel No.355.

4. Different reports give a variety of details concerning arrival and departure dates. According to the Health Officer's report she left Bristol on 16th April and also left Simons Bay on 18th July.

to her colonies throughout the Empire. From 1828 to 1837 the average number of free migrants arriving in Australia from Great Britain was about 2,650 per annum. As the depression developed in the late 1830's the British government began to more actively encourage bounty immigration, a scheme of assisted passage to the colonies. The aim was to ease the depression by decreasing the number of hungry mouths to feed. The number of bounty immigrants arriving in Australia shot up after 1837:<sup>6</sup>

Bounty Immigrants Arriving in Australia	
Year	
1835	1,860
1836	3,124
1837	5,054
1838	14,021
1839	15,786
1840	15,850
1841	32,625
1842	8,534
1845	830

- \* William and Thomas Organ had been in Australia since 1835 and may have sent favourable reports on life in Australia back to their family in Dursley. The years 1835-41 were boom years for New South Wales and this probably influenced the letters of William and Thomas, leading them to extoll Australia's virtues.

The Organ family were part of this initial wave of bounty immigrants into Australia. They were all hopeful of a better life in the new colony than Britain could offer. Undoubtedly the thought of a brighter future for their children spurred on Elias and Elizabeth and couples like them.

For whatever reasons, Elias Organ and part of his family sailed from Bristol on 15th April 1839 bound for New South Wales. Conditions on board can hardly be imagined. There were 236 bounty immigrants and 32 crew on board the *Bussorah Merchant*. And fortunately we have a first hand account of the conditions on board. Below is part of a written report of the voyage by the ship's surgeon James Scott, MD, Royal Navy:

"The migrants numbered 111 males and 125 females, two female children dying during the voyage. The journey took 141 days including 12 days at anchorage in Simons Bay. One male child was born on board. Divine service was performed 14 times and all the immigrants were Protestants. Two schools were established and about 54 children attended regularly. To prevent idleness the males were obliged to clean the decks and were invited to assist the crew in working the ship which they did very willingly. The females were also obliged to clean their own bed places and were encouraged in

6. Table based on Appendix No.3 of Twelfth General Report of Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners P.P. 1852, XVIII, 1499.

their attempts to improve their sewing by repairing their clothes, making and repairing bed curtains and other light works. But the best amusement and exercise could not be procured - dancing, because no crew or passenger could play the violin or any other instrument. So those males and females who had voices were permitted and encouraged to give evening concerts - an innocent amusement."

Elias and family would have suffered the cramped conditions, lack of privacy, the sea sickness and a fear of ever reaching New South Wales, along with the other Gloucestershire families on board. Theirs was a 5-month journey from 15th April to 3rd September 1839, across more than 12,000 miles of ocean. It took them 11 weeks to reach Simons Bay from England. Undoubtedly the extra long voyage gave rise to their unusual 12 day stopover at Simons Bay. From there to Sydney Harbour it took them only 7 weeks, arriving on the 3rd September, 1839.

Upon their arrival and disembarkation it was usual for bounty immigrants to be left to their own devices - there were no appropriate government schemes to receive the immigrants upon their arrival or to arrange employment for them. Some were given shelter at the Immigrants Barracks, Bent Street, Sydney, and ads were placed in the Sydney papers stating "Persons desirous of obtaining their Services are requested to apply to the Superintendent of the Barrack". Even though there was a chronic labour shortage throughout the colony, it was left up to anyone needing workers to travel to Sydney and take their pick from the Immigrants Barracks. Needless to say this was not a very good scheme as it left thousands of people homeless and jobless upon their arrival in Australia. It was not until a certain Caroline Chisholm started her own scheme in the early 1840's of finding work and homes for the thousands of bounty immigrants then arriving in New South Wales that they were properly taken care of upon arrival in N.S.W. Elias and family did not have to suffer the indignation and insecurity of waiting at the Immigrants Barracks or walking the streets of Sydney looking for work. According to a letter written by Mrs Florence Fitch concerning the family's arrival in Australia:

"After the birth of Maria [William's daughter], when she was only a few weeks old, the ship bringing Elias and family to Australia was expected in from England. Of course they [the families of William and Thomas] were all anxiously awaiting the lights from the ship at the stockade on South Head."<sup>7</sup>

Upon their arrival the family headed straight for Wollongong where William and Thomas were stationed at the local stockade. It is also possible that the family stayed in Sydney for a few days to attend an auction at J.T. Wilsons on 10th September. On offer were some Wollongong town allotments and brick cottages. Assuming that the family arrived in Australia with money or valuable assets, or that William and Thomas had saved while in the army, it is very likely that they either attended this, or a similar auction, for by March 1841

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7. This reference to the 'stockade on South Head' refers to the Wollongong Stockade, situated on the point at Wollongong Harbour.

Elias and part of the family were living in two brick cottages at Burrelli Street, Wollongong.

At the time of their arrival at Port Jackson in September 1839 there were three means of travelling to Wollongong:

- (i) On horseback via Liverpool, Campbelltown and Appin, then down the Illawarra escarpment by a number of treacherous tracks.
- (ii) On foot, by a similar route.
- (iii) By sea. At the time there were 2 steamers running almost daily between Sydney and Wollongong, depending on the weather conditions, namely the Sophia Jane and the William IV. Wollongong had no harbour at this stage and passengers were forced to disembark by a small row boat, setting down at either South Wollongong beach or on the small beach at the present Belmore Basin. Wollongong was also visited regularly by sailing ships engaged in trade.

As no records survive we do not know whether Elias and family arrived by land or sea, however it is safe to assume that they came by sea as the land route was long and difficult and would have appeared quite undesirable after the long sea voyage from England.

Undoubtedly there were scenes of great rejoicing as Elias' family was reunited on the shores of Wollongong Harbour. It is this family which was present in Australia on the 3rd September 1839 which is dealt with in this family history.

A number of descriptions of Wollongong in late 1839-early 1840 survive, along with the accompanying painting showing a south-westerly view of 'Wollongong from the Stockade, April 20, 1840'.

Lady Jane Franklin, wife of the Governor of Van Diemens Land, visited Wollongong in May 1839 and made the following observations:

"There is a great run on Illawarra now. Every boat brings fresh emigrants. The mechanics all get high wages - they drink it out £20-£30 at a time .. Approach Wollongong ... We come on broad ugly streets; there are brick town houses here. Temporary wooden boarded huts for the mechanics are built on their allotments till the houses are erected ... Wollongong is about 3½ years old ... "

According to the reminiscences of Mrs Atchison, who arrived in Wollongong around January 1840, just 4 months after Elias and family:

"Where Wollongong is today was then heavy timber, with about a dozen settlers homes erected in the bush. There was a large building [the Stockade] back from the landing place where the convicts were housed and a storehouse [Waterloo Stores] where the Brighton Lawn is situated. Crown Street was a bullock track thru the bush ... Upon arrival of the little steamer [William IV] at Wollongong we were helped ashore by one of the sailors from the steamer. There was no wharf or landing place and produce had to be carried to dry land."



Another view was given by the Honourable Jas. Gormley M.L.C. who arrived in Wollongong in February 1840:

"Wollongong was a prosperous town in 1840 ... When we arrived at Wollongong in the Sophia Jane in February there was no wharf or jetty at the place. The steamer had to anchor out in the small harbour, which was badly sheltered, the vessel being likely to be blown ashore if a storm from the north set in. The passengers and goods had to be taken from the vessel in a boat to a sandy beach where there was a considerable roll in the waves which caused great difficulty in landing. As one of my sisters was carrying me from the boat to the land she was struck by a wave and we both got a thorough ducking."

Such was Wollongong around the time of the arrival of the Organ family in September 1839. In 1828 the population of the Illawarra region was 423. In March 1841 the regions population was 4,018 with 831 in the town of Wollongong. Compared with the large population and overcrowding of their native Gloucestershire, the Illawarra region must have seemed like a primitive wilderness to Elias and family. The Illawarra region in 1840 was still frontier country. Due to the presence of an almost impenetrable escarpment and the lack of any good harbours the Five Islands region, as Illawarra was then known, was slower to develop than other regions around Sydney such as Newcastle, Camden and the Blue Mountains. Even though only forty five miles from Sydney the region was topographically isolated and remained so for many years. It was only in 1834 that Major Mitchell, Surveyor General, surveyed the land of Charles Throsby Smith at Wollongong and divided it into town allotments. Wollongong was proclaimed a town in November 1834, but 5 years later it was still heavily timbered and development was slow to come. Wollongong township in the 1840's was simply the regional centre for a farming community. It was a town very much in its infancy.

As of 1st October 1839 the Organ family then present in Wollongong was composed of:

- \* Elias Organ, 55 years old<sup>8</sup>
- \* Elizabeth, his wife, 55 years old
- \* William Organ (29 years old) and his family
  - \* Eliza (Best), his wife
  - \* William Henry, 7 years
  - \* Sarah Emily, 5 years
  - \* Elizabeth, 2 years
  - \* Maria, 2 months
- \* George Organ (27 years old) and his family
  - \* Maria (Morgan), his wife, 26 years old
  - \* William Henry, 5 years
  - \* Emily, 4 years

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8. Ages according to Birth Certificate information. Note that Elias and Elizabeth stated their ages as 49 years upon the shipping records when they were both at least 5 years older. Perhaps people over 50 years old were discouraged from emigrating to the colonies as young healthy workers were needed.

and Elias' other children

- \* Thomas Organ (25 years old)
- \* Henry Organ, 17 years
- \* Mary Ann Organ, 16 years
- \* Elizabeth Organ, 15 years

What happened to the family upon their arrival in Wollongong? A partial answer to this question is revealed by the New South Wales Census of the year 1841, taken in March 1841, just on 18 months after the family's arrival in Australia. Luckily the census returns for the Illawarra region still survive and reveal a wealth of information. According to the census the family was spread over four locations, all relatively close to Wollongong:

- (i) The families of Elias and William were living in 2 brick cottages in Burelli Street, Wollongong
- (ii) George and family were renting a farm at Fairy Meadow
- (iii) Thomas and family were renting a farm at Mount Drummond
- (iv) Mary Ann Organ and her new husband John Buckland were living at Goondarrew.

Within 18 months of their arrival in Australia the family had all settled in the Wollongong area. Undoubtedly the fact that William and Thomas had been stationed in Wollongong before their arrival had influenced their decision and helped them in finding accommodation and settling in. We do not know how well off the family were upon their arrival. We do know they were all relatively well educated - they could all read and write which was not usual for the time. Subsequent events suggest that Elias and George arrived in Australia with enough money to buy some land and secure their future.

The first major event after the family's arrival in Wollongong was the untimely death of William's wife, Eliza, on 23rd February 1840, at the Wollongong stockade. She was only 29. This left William, then still a member of the 28th, with 4 young children to rear. Thank goodness for the timely arrival of Elias and Elizabeth to help William through this period. Eliza possibly died of pneumonia on 23rd February 1840. Her place of burial is unknown.<sup>9</sup>

On 1st April 1840 William and Thomas were discharged from the 28th Regiment and 4 months later Thomas married Honoria McNamara, a young Catholic girl. They were married by Father John Rigney in the old Wollongong Catholic Church, next door to the present cathedral at the bottom end of Crown Street. As Elias and family were listed as Wesleyans upon their arrival in Australia, it is possible that the marriage of their son to a young Irish-Catholic girl may have caused some friction considering the staunch religious views present at that time.

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9. At the time, February 1840, there was a Presbyterian cemetery in Kembla Street, Wollongong and a Catholic cemetery at the bottom end of Crown Street near the beach. As Eliza was buried by the Church of England Minister, Rev. M.D. Meares, it is possible that she was buried in the Kembla Street cemetery in an unmarked grave. This is now Pioneer Park. She may also have been buried "under any tree, in any swamp".

The family's first year in Wollongong was to end on a happy note with the marriage of Elias and Elizabeth's 17 year old daughter, Mary Anne, to John Buckland. They were married on 17th December 1840 at St. Michaels Church of England, Wollongong, by Rev. M.D. Meares. St. Michaels at this stage was actually an old barn in Market Street which had been donated by Charles Throsby Smith and was doubling as the Schoolhouse during the week. The Schoolhouse barn was to remain the Church until the present St. Michaels was finished in 1859.

#### THE 1841 CENSUS

In March of 1841 a census was taken throughout the colony. For some unknown reason the census returns for the Illawarra region survive. The next surviving census returns are for 1891. The returns for the many census' taken between that period no longer survive unfortunately.

There are five returns from the 1841 Census concerning the Organ family:

Return Number	Head of Household	Owner	Place of Residence
54	William Organ	Elias Organ	Barella St. Wollongong
55	Elias Organ	Elias Organ	Barella St. Wollongong
149	George Organ	James Brooker	Fairy Meadow
211	Thomas Organ	Mr. White	Mount Drummond
26310	John Buckland		Goondarrew

The actual returns are included on the following pages, however they need some interpretation.

RETURN No. 54: This return states that William Organ was living in an unfinished brick house owned by his father Elias Organ. The house was situated in Barella Street, Wollongong, and there were three Free occupants:

- (i) One male adult, namely William Organ.
- (ii) One female teenager, possibly William's future wife Mary Ann Spittal Craddock, or his sister Elizabeth.
- (iii) One female child between the ages of 2 and 7, probably William's daughter Eliza then aged 3 years 10 months.

RETURN No. 55: This return states that Elias Organ was living in an unfinished brick house which he owned. The house was situated in Barella Street, Wollongong, probably next door to his son's, William, house. There were 6 Free occupants:

- (i) One male adult, namely Elias Organ.
- (ii) One female adult, namely Elizabeth Organ, his wife.
- (iii) One female teenager, namely their daughter Elizabeth, then aged 16 years 7 months.
- (iv) Two male teenagers, probably Henry Organ, then aged 19 years, and William Henry, son of William and Eliza Best, aged 9 years.
- (v) One female baby, under 1 year old. This was probably Maria, the daughter of William and Eliza, then aged 6 months.

## NEW SOUTH WALES.

(CENSUS OF THE YEAR 1841.)

Return No. 54

County, Parish, Town or District.

Wollongong

Name of Householder, Employer of Servants, or Person in charge.

William Organ

Place of Residence, and Street if in a Town.

Barella Street

Questions to be proposed to every Householder, Employer of Servants, and Proprietor or Occupier of Land, in the Colony, by Persons appointed by the Justices of the several Towns and Districts, respectively, to collect the information required by the Act.

Replies to be inserted by the Householder, if able to write, otherwise by one of the Collectors appointed by the Justices, under a penalty, in case of failure, or neglect, or of giving a false answer, of not less than Forty Shillings, nor more than Five Pounds.

1. What is the Name of the Person at the head, or in charge of, this House, or Establishment? and who is the Proprietor thereof?

William Organ  
Elias Organ

2. Is the Dwelling House built of Stone? of Brick? or of Wood?

Brick

3. Is it Completed, or Unfinished?

Unfinished

4. Is it Inhabited, or Uninhabited?

Inhabited

5. How many Persons are residing in this House or Establishment, including yourself?

Three

6. How many of those Persons are Free?

Three

Numerical RETURN showing the Age, Sex, Religion, Occupation, Condition, and Trade or Calling, of Persons in the said House or Establishment.					
SEX.					
			MALE.		TOTAL.
			Married.	Single.	
			FEMALE.		TOTAL.
			Married.	Single.	
Numbers of each Age.	Under 2 Years .. ..				
	2, and under 7 .. ..				1
	7, and under 14 .. ..				
	14, and under 21 .. ..				1
	21, and under 45 .. ..		1		
	45, and under 60 .. ..				
	60, and upwards .. ..				
	* Totals....		1		2
Civil Condition.	Free {				
	Born in the Colony .. ..				1
	Arrived Free .. ..		1		1
	Other Free Persons .. ..				
	Bond {				
	Holding Tickets-of-Leave .. ..				
	In Government Employment .. ..				
In Private Assignment .. ..					
* Totals....		1		2	3
Religion.	Church of England ... ..				
	Church of Scotland .. ..				
	Wesleyan Methodists .. ..		1		2
	Other Protestant Dissenters .. ..				
	Roman Catholics .. ..				
	Jews .. ..				
	Mahomedans and Pagans.. ..				
* Totals....		1		2	3
Occupation.	Land Proprietors, Merchants, Bankers, and Professional Persons .. ..				
	Shopkeepers, and other Retail Dealers .. ..				
	Mechanics and Artificers .. ..		1		1
	Shepherds, and others in the care of Sheep, Gardeners, Stockmen, and Persons employed in Agriculture .. ..				
	Domestic Servants .. ..				
	All other Persons not included in the foregoing classes .. ..				2
	* Totals....		1		2
Dated at <u>Wallingford</u> } Signature of <u>Wm. Rogers</u> Homeholder. <u>8 March 1841.</u> } <u>Wm. Rogers</u> Collector.					
* N.B. These Totals, if the Return be correct, should correspond.					

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NEW SOUTH WALES.

(CENSUS OF THE YEAR 1841.)

Return No. 55

County, Parish, Town or District.

Wollongong

Name of Householder, Employer of Servants, or Person in charge.

Elias Orgaw

Place of Residence, and Street if in a Town.

Barrella Street

*Questions to be proposed to every Householder, Employer of Servants, and Proprietor or Occupier of Land, in the Colony, by Persons appointed by the Justices of the several Towns and Districts, respectively, to collect the information required by the Act.*

*Replies to be inserted by the Householder, if able to write, otherwise by one of the Collectors appointed by the Justices, under a penalty, in case of failure, or neglect, or of giving a false answer, of not less than Forty Shillings, nor more than Five Pounds.*

1. What is the Name of the Person at the head, or in charge of, this House, or Establishment? and who is the Proprietor thereof?

Elias Orgaw  
do.

2. Is the Dwelling House built of Stone? of Brick? or of Wood?

Brick

3. Is it Completed, or Unfinished?

Unfinished

4. Is it Inhabited, or Uninhabited?

Inhabited

5. How many Persons are residing in this House or Establishment, including yourself?

Six

6. How many of those Persons are Free?

Six

Numerical RETURN showing the Age, Sex, Religion, Occupation, Condition, and Trade or Calling, of Persons in the said House or Establishment.						
		SEX.				TOTAL.
		MALE.		FEMALE.		
		Married.	Single.	Married.	Single.	
Numbers of each Age.	Under 2 Years .. .. .			1		1
	2, and under 7 .. .. .					
	7, and under 14 .. .. .					
	14, and under 21 .. .. .		2		1	3
	21, and under 45 .. .. .					
	45, and under 60 .. .. .	1		1		2
	60, and upwards .. .. .					
* Totals....		1	2	1	2	6
Civil Condition.	Free {					
	Born in the Colony .. .. .			1		1
	Arrived Free .. .. .	1	2	1	1	5
	Other Free Persons .. .. .					
	Bond. {					
	Holding Tickets-of-Leave .. .. .					
In Government Employment .. .. .						
In Private Assignment .. .. .						
* Totals....		1	2	1	2	6
Religion.	Church of England .. .. .					
	Church of Scotland .. .. .					
	Wesleyan Methodists .. .. .	1	2	1	2	6
	Other Protestant Dissenters .. .. .					
	Roman Catholics .. .. .					
	Jews .. .. .					
	Mahomedans and Pagans.. .. .					
* Totals....		1	2	1	2	6
Occupation.	Land Proprietors, Merchants, Bankers, and Professional Persons .. .. .					
	Shopkeepers, and other Retail Dealers .. .. .					
	Mechanics and Artificers .. .. .	1	2			3
	Shepherds, and others in the care of Sheep, Gardeners, Stockmen, and Persons employed in Agriculture .. .. .					
	Domestic Servants .. .. .			1	2	3
	All other Persons not included in the foregoing classes .. .. .					
	* Totals....	1	2	1	2	6
Dated at <i>Wollongong</i> 8 March 1841. Signature of <i>Elias Brown</i> Householder. <i>H. Seales</i> Collector.						
* N.B. These Totals, if the Return be correct, should correspond.						

## NEW SOUTH WALES.

(CENSUS OF THE YEAR 1841.)

Return No.

149

County, Parish, Town or District.

Mauana

Name of Householder, Employer of Servants, or Person in charge.

George Organ

Place of Residence, and Street if in a Town.

Fair Meadow

Questions to be proposed to every Householder, Employer of Servants, and Proprietor or Occupier of Land, in the Colony, by Persons appointed by the Justices of the several Towns and Districts, respectively, to collect the information required by the Act.

Replies to be inserted by the Householder, if able to write, otherwise by one of the Collectors appointed by the Justices, under a penalty, in case of failure, or neglect, or of giving a false answer, of not less than Forty Shillings, nor more than Five Pounds.

1. What is the Name of the Person at the head, or in charge of, this House, or Establishment? and who is the Proprietor thereof?

George Organ  
James Brooker

2. Is the Dwelling House built of Stone? of Brick? or of Wood?

Wood

3. Is it Completed, or Unfinished?

Completed

4. Is it Inhabited, or Uninhabited?

Inhabited

5. How many Persons are residing in this House or Establishment, including yourself?

Five

6. How many of those Persons are Free?

Five



Numerical RETURN showing the Age, Sex, Religion, Occupation, Condition, and Trade or Calling, of Persons in the said House or Establishment.							
			SEX.				
			MALE.		FEMALE.		TOTAL.
			Married.	Single.	Married.	Single.	
Numbers of each Age.	Under 2 Years .. ..						
	2, and under 7 .. ..			1		1	
	7, and under 14 .. ..		1			1	
	14, and under 21 .. ..						
	21, and under 45 .. ..	1	1	1		3	
	45, and under 60 .. ..						
	60, and upwards .. ..						
	* Totals....	1	2	1	1	5	
Civil Condition.	Free {						
	Born in the Colony .. ..						
	Arrived Free .. ..	1	1	1	1	4	
	Other Free Persons .. ..		1			1	
	Bond. {						
	Holding Tickets-of-Leave .. ..						
In Government Employment .. ..							
In Private Assignment .. ..							
* Totals....	1	2	1	1	5		
Religion.	Church of England ... ..	1	2	1	1	5	
	Church of Scotland .. ..						
	Wesleyan Methodists .. ..						
	Other Protestant Dissenters .. ..						
	Roman Catholics .. ..						
	Jews .. ..						
	Mahomedans and Pagans .. ..						
* Totals....	1	2	1	1	5		
Occupation.	Land Proprietors, Merchants, Bankers, and Professional Persons .. ..						
	Shopkeepers, and other Retail Dealers .. ..						
	Mechanics and Artificers .. ..	1				1	
	Shepherds, and others in the care of Sheep, Gardeners, Stockmen, and Persons employed in Agriculture .. ..		1			1	
	Domestic Servants .. ..						
	All other Persons not included in the foregoing classes .. ..		1	1	1	3	
	* Totals....	1	2	1	1	5	
Dated at <u>San Francisco</u> Signature of <u>George D. Davis</u> Household. <u>1861.</u> <u>J. D. Smith</u> Collector.							
* N.B. These Totals, if the Names be correct, should correspond.							

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# NEW SOUTH WALES.

(CENSUS OF THE YEAR 1841.)

Return No. 211

County, Parish, Town or District.

*Hawarra*

Name of Householder, Employer of Servants, or Person in charge.

*Thomas Organ*

Place of Residence, and Street if in a Town.

*Mount Drummond*

Questions to be proposed to every Householder, Employer of Servants, and Proprietor or Occupier of Land, in the Colony, by Persons appointed by the Justices of the several Towns and Districts, respectively, to collect the information required by the Act.

Replies to be inserted by the Householder, if able to write, otherwise by one of the Collectors appointed by the Justices, under a penalty, in case of failure, or neglect, or of giving a false answer, of not less than Forty Shillings. nor more than Five Pounds.

1. What is the Name of the Person at the head, or in charge of, this House, or Establishment? and who is the Proprietor thereof?

*Thomas Drummond*  
*Mr. White*

2. Is the Dwelling House built of Stone? of Brick? or of Wood?

*Wood*

3. Is it Completed, or Unfinished?

*Completed*

4. Is it Inhabited, or Uninhabited?

*Inhabited*

5. How many Persons are residing in this House or Establishment, including yourself?

*Two*

6. How many of those Persons are Free?

*Two*

**Numerical RETURN showing the Age, Sex, Religion, Occupation, Condition, and Trade or Calling, of Persons in the said House or Establishment.**

					SEX.				
					MALE.		FEMALE.		TOTAL.
					Married.	Single.	Married.	Single.	
Numbers of each Age.	Under 2 Years .. ..								
	2, and under 7 .. ..								
	7, and under 14 .. ..								
	14, and under 21 .. ..						/		/
	21, and under 45 .. ..				/				/
	45, and under 60 .. ..								
	60, and upwards .. ..								
* Totals....					/		/		2
Civil Condition.	Free.	Born in the Colony .. ..							
		Arrived Free .. ..			/		/		2
		Other Free Persons .. ..							
	Bond.	Holding Tickets-of-Leave .. ..							
		In Government Employment .. ..							
		In Private Assignment .. ..							
	* Totals....					/		/	
Religion.	Church of England ... ..								
	Church of Scotland .. ..								
	Wesleyan Methodists .. ..				/				/
	Other Protestant Dissenters .. ..								
	Roman Catholics .. ..						/		/
	Jews .. ..								
	Mahomedans and Pagans.. ..								
* Totals....					/		/		2
Occupation.	Land Proprietors, Merchants, Bankers, } and Professional Persons .. ..								
	Shopkeepers, and other Retail Dealers .. ..								
	Mechanics and Artificers .. ..				/				/
	Shepherds, and others in the care of } Sheep, Gardeners, Stockmen, and } Persons employed in Agriculture .. ..								
	Domestic Servants .. ..						/		/
	All other Persons not included in the } foregoing classes .. ..						/		/
	* Totals....					/		/	

Dated at Grand Cayman Signature of Thomas D. J. J. Homeholder.  
11 March 1841. J. H. J. J. Collector.

\* N.B. These Totals, if the Return be correct, should correspond.

RETURN No. 149: This return states that George Organ was living in a wooden house owned by James Broker. The house was situated at Fairy Meadow and contained 5 Free occupants:

- (i) One male adult, namely George Organ.
- (ii) One female adult, namely Maria Organ, his wife.
- (iii) One male child, namely William Henry, their son, aged 17.
- (iv) One female child, namely Emily their daughter, aged 6.
- (v) One male adult, being an unknown farm hand.

RETURN No. 211: This return states that Thomas Organ was living in a wooden house owned by a Mr. White. The house was situated at Mount Drummond and was occupied by 2 Free persons:

- (i) One male adult, namely Thomas Organ.
- (ii) One female adult, namely Honoria his wife.

(For a detailed analysis of the Census see Early Illawarra by K. & T. Henderson.<sup>11</sup>)

The census was taken in the middle of a boom period for Wollongong. The town's population of 831 was at a peak and the depression of the middle to late '40's was to see it drop to c.540 by 1846. "Wollongong was a hotbed of real estate speculation in the early '40's. Not only was there an active trade in vacant lots but a rising speculative construction industry meant that there was a supply of blocks with buildings already erected on them."<sup>12</sup>

The census returns reveal some interesting aspects of the family's early years in Wollongong. Thomas appears to have been leasing a farm at Mount Drummond. Thomas may have been working the farm, or was in the employ of one of the nearby farmers.

According to the census George seems to have neglected his tailoring trade and taken up farming at Fairy Meadow while Elias and William were living in Wollongong township. This raises the question of how Elias and William were supporting their families. Were they living on the assets they had brought out from England? Were George and Thomas' farming operations supplying food for the rest of the family? What was William's trade at this time? Unfortunately the census does not answer these and many other questions.

The census does show William sharing his house with a female child (his daughter Eliza?) and a female teenager, possibly his future wife Mary Ann Spittal Craddock or his sister Elizabeth. However considering that she was 5 months pregnant when they married, it was probably Mary Ann who was living with William when the census was taken on 8th March 1841. On the 14th April 1841 William Organ married Mary Ann Spittal Craddock at Wollongong. Mary Ann had arrived in Australia on board the Bussorah Merchant along with Elias and family and was listed as a nursemaid. At the time of their marriage William was 30 and Mary Ann was 17 years old. She may have been acting as nursemaid to William's young children, during the course of which she

11. 'Early Illawarra - people, houses, life. An Australian 1838 Monograph'. Krimhilde and Terry Henderson, Canberra, 1983.

12. Ibid., p.76.

WILLIAM ORGAN = MARY ANN SPITTAL  
CRADDOCK

b. 10.7.1810

m. 14.4.1841

d. 24.7.1898

b. ? 1824

m. 14.4.1841

d. 31.7.1860

1. JOHN HUMPHREY    2. FREDERICK    3. EDWARD CARO CRADDOCK  
b. 29.8.1841        b. 2.7.1842        b. 27.3.1844  
d. 29.8.1841        d. 2.7.1842        d. 16.5.1869

4. ISABELLA ANN    5. ALBERT ELIAS    6. CLARA JANE  
b. 6.5.1846        b. 26.3.1849        b. 9.1.1850  
d. 25.7.1859        d. 30.3.1930        d. 4.1.1852

7. EMILY CRADDOCK    8. CLARA JANE    9. HUMPHREY GEORGE  
b. 11.10.1851        b. 4.9.1853        b. 1.5.1856  
d. 8.9.1938        d. - .8.1943        d. 30.9.1929

10. MARY EMMALINE  
b. 23.3.1858  
d. 18.2.1936

became pregnant and they decided to marry. They were joined in holy wedlock on the 19th April 1841 at the Wollongong Schoolhouse, i.e., St. Michael's Church of England, by the Rev. M.D. Meares and with the consent of Patrick Plunkett, the Police Magistrate. William's first wife, Eliza, had been dead a mere 13½ months, but such were the demands of pioneer life that he needed a mother for his young children and so it was that Mary Ann Spittal Craddock became William's second wife. The 14th April 1841 was a doubly joyous occasion for the Organ family as it also saw the baptism of Emily Organ, the daughter of George and Maria Organ. Emily had been born in Gloucestershire on 20th June 1835 almost 6 years previous but she had to wait until this day before she was baptized into the Church of England by Rev. M.D. Meares.

Two months later, on 24th June 1841, Elias' youngest daughter Elizabeth married Thomas Cleverdon, a farmer of Ryan's Vale, Figtree. They were married by Rev. John Tait, a minister in the Church of Scotland. Elizabeth was 16 years 10 months old at the time of her marriage, a mere child, however young unmarried women were relatively scarce both in the Illawarra and throughout the colony at that time and there would have been many young unmarried male suitors. Thomas Cleverdon was a very eligible bachelor, eventually owning more than 400 acres of land in portions west of Wollongong around Figtree and on top of the escarpment behind Mount Kembla.

August 1841 was a month filled with both joy and sorrow for the Organ family. On 19th August 1841 a daughter, Mary Ann, was born to Thomas and Honoria Organ at their residence at Charcoal. All the children of Thomas and Honoria were baptized into the Roman Catholic faith. Even though Thomas' abode is given as Charcoal, i.e., Charcoal Creek or Unanderra, on the baptismal certificate, it does not imply that he had shifted since the time of the census 5 months earlier. Mt. Drummond and Charcoal Creek are both within close proximity of one another and could in fact describe the same area. During the 19th century there was frequent changing of town names within Australia as populations moved about and new areas were settled. Many old names within the Illawarra region, such as Charcoal Creek, Goondarrew, Ryans Vale, Dunlop Vale and Garden Hill have long since been replaced or forgotten.

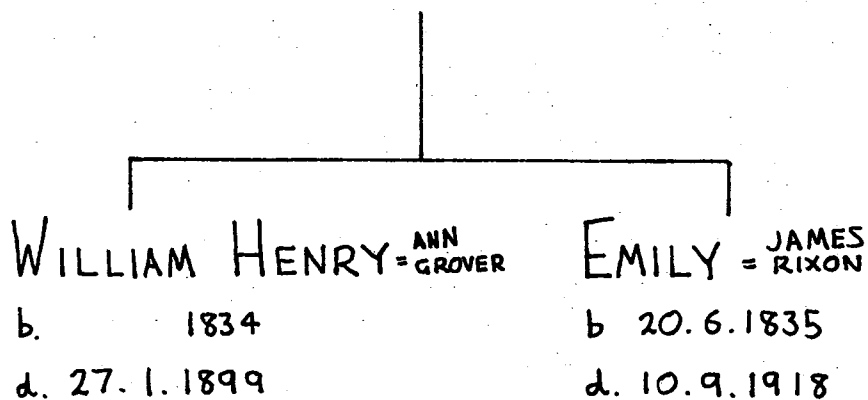
August 1841 was also to see the birth of the first child of William and Mary Ann, however their joy was to turn to sorrow when their first son, John Humphrey, died at birth on 29th August 1841. The tragedy was to be repeated just 10 months later when their second son Frederick also died at birth on 2nd July 1842. It was a hard life for pioneer women such as Mary Ann - they were married at a young age and faced a future of domestic drudgery and child bearing. A mere month after the death of her first child Mary Ann was again pregnant. The primitive medical facilities in Wollongong during those years would have made childbirth a dangerous business. Most deliveries were by midwife as doctors were a scarce commodity and any complications during pregnancy usually resulted in the death of the mother or baby, or both. Sadly this was part and parcel of life in the colonies in the nineteenth century. Mary Ann was like so many other women of her time.

The end of 1841 saw the Organ family settling into their new life in Australia. Elias and Elizabeth were in their mid-50's and living at Wollongong, next door to the son William and his new wife. Thomas, Elizabeth and Mary Anne Organ had all recently married and settled in the district. Henry was still living with his parents at Wollongong and George and his family were farming at Fairy Meadow. Like most migrants they must have had thoughts of returning home to England during those first 2 years - this we will never know. We do know they stayed on and played their part, like thousands of other families, in the development of their newly adopted country.

b. - 9. 1813

m. 10.9.1832

d. 10.4.1898



WILLIAM HENRY = ANN GROVER

b. 1834

d. 27. 1. 1899

EMILY = JAMES  
RISON

b 20.6.1835

d. 10.9.1918



THOMAS FISHER ORGAN = HONORIA M<sup>c</sup>NAMARA

b. 13.3.1814

b. ?

m. 10.4.1840

m. 10.4.1840

d. 12.8.1867

d. ?

1. MARY ANN

b. 19.8.1841

2. ELIZABETH

b. 4.12.1845

3. ELIZABETH BRIDGET

b. 21.1.1847

4. HANNAH AGNES FISHER

b. 27.6.1849

5. THOMAS HENRY FISHER

b. 14.7.1852

6. WERBURGHA

b. 3.2.1857

7. JOHN THOMAS

b. 21.6.1859

8. EMILY MARIA

b. 1860

9. STEPHEN

b. 11.1.1862

HENRY ORGAN = SARAH HURT

b. 1822

b. ?

m. 26.12.1843

m. 26.12.1843

d. 18.9.1867

d. 1875

1. WILLIAM

b. 12.11.1845

d. 22.12.1845

2. SARAH ELIZABETH

b. 15.4.1847

3. MARY ANN ELIZA

b. 7.10.1849

4. ELIAS

b. 14.1.1854

d. 8.6.1931

5. MARIANNE AMELIA

b. 10.8.1857

6. HENRY

b. 23.7.1866

d. 22.5.1916

7. LETITIA

8. AMELIA

JOHN BUCKLAND = MARY ANN ORGAN

b. - . 6. 1815

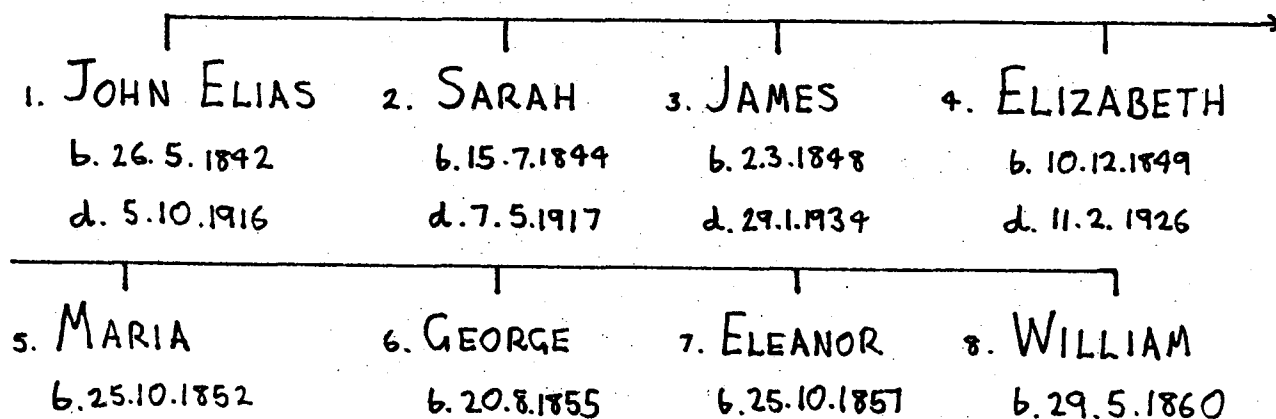
b. 1823

m. 17.12.1840

m. 17.12.1840

d. 17. 9. 1886

d. 16. 3. 1891



FAMILY GROUP CHART NUMBER 8

THOMAS CLEVERDON = ELIZA ORGAN

b. ?

m. 24.6.1841

d. 6.2.1864

b. 7.8.1824

m. 24.6.1841

d. 30.4.1897

1. HENRY

b. 29.11.1842

d. 3.4.1926

2. PRISCILLA

b. 1.2.1845

3. THOMAS

b. 9.2.1848

d. 8.1.1916

4. ELIZABETH

b. 6.7.1850

d. 11.8.1917

5. SOFALA

b. 15.11.1852

d. 22.10.1946

6. LOUISA

b. 3.9.1855

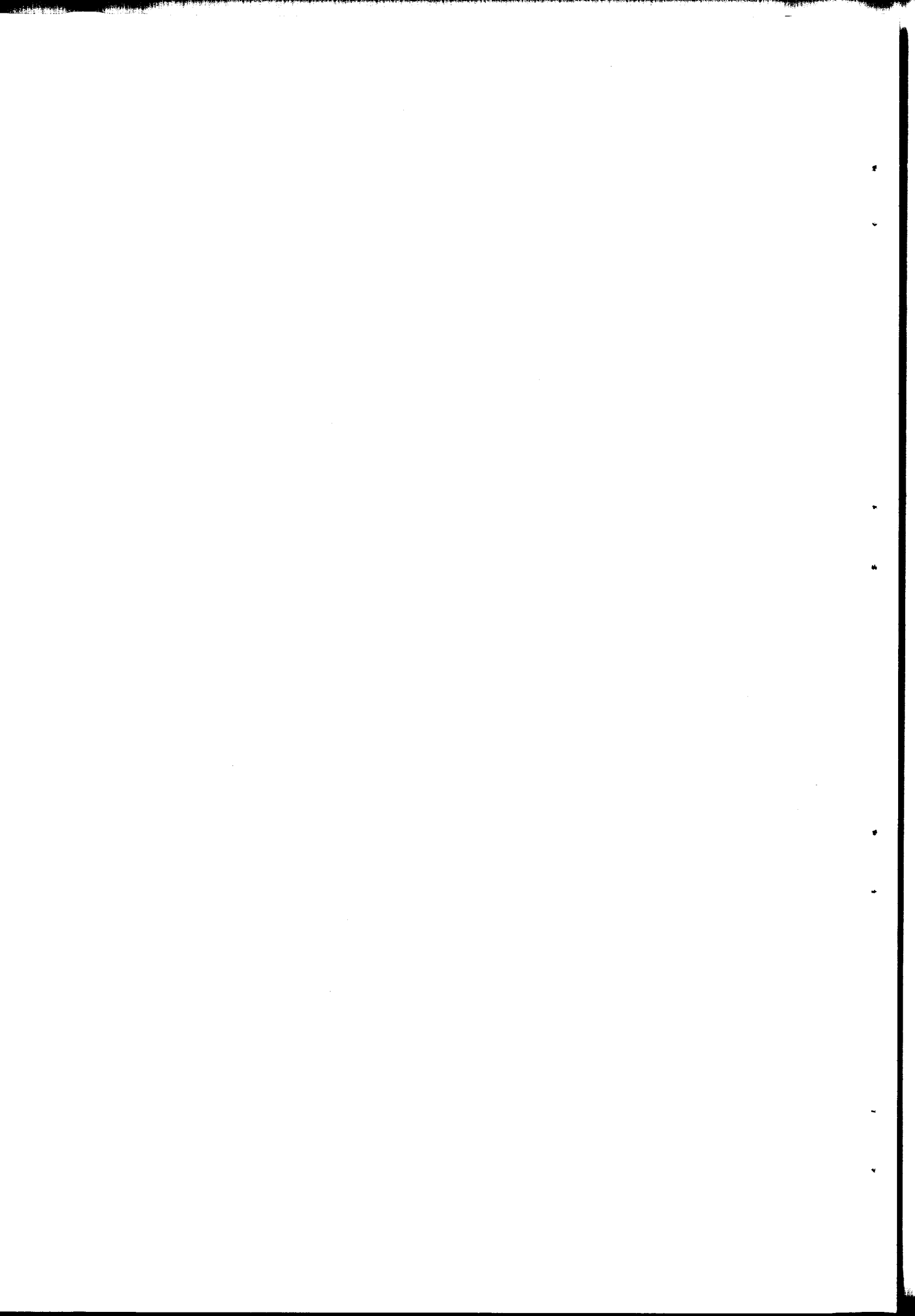
d. 16.7.1952

7. JOHN JAMES

b. 25.12.1857

d. 1.1.1952

FAMILY GROUP CHART NUMBER 9



## CHAPTER 4

1842-1855

### SETTLING DOWN AND MOVING OUT

The years 1842-55 are dark years in Organ family research for the reason that not much personal information is available about the family during those years - the following account is based almost entirely on official records. In 1841 the Census had supplied a lot of interesting information and the appearance of the Illawarra Mercury in October 1855 was to supply a great deal more, for by 1855 the various members of the Organ family still in the Illawarra region were well settled and were active members of its community. The main sources of information for this period are Birth, Death and Marriage certificates, land records and official correspondence such as Petitions. Nothing else remains. This was also a bleak period throughout the colony for the boom years of 1839-41 were followed by years of depression from 1842 until the goldrushes of the early 1850's. The population of Wollongong fell to about 540 in 1846 and economic growth throughout the region was stifled. Times were hard for the man on the land and insolvency was a common plight amongst the business community.

The whereabouts of the various members of the family during the years 1842-55 can be briefly outlined as follows:

- \* Elias and Elizabeth Organ: Sometime between March 1841 and December 1843 Elias and family left their house in Burelli Street, Wollongong, and took up farming at Figtree. Elias and Elizabeth were to remain in their house at Figtree until their deaths.
- \* William Organ: As of 1842 William and family were living in one of his father's houses at Burelli Street, Wollongong. At some point prior to 1848 William opened up a Boot and Shoe Warehouse at the corner of Crown and Kembla Streets, Wollongong, and was living there in 1855.
- \* George Organ: During this period George was carrying on his farming at Fairy Meadow, and developing his assets by the purchase of land at Wollongong and surrounding districts.
- \* Thomas Organ: Left the Illawarra during this period. He was working in the area of Queanbeyan-Yass during the years 1845-51 and was farming back at Wollongong and Bulli in 1852-55.
- \* Henry Organ: Left Wollongong and was working in a tailor shop in Sydney by 1844. He stayed in Sydney until 1854 when he briefly returned to Wollongong for a few years before eventually returning to Sydney in 1856.
- \* Eliza Organ was living with her husband Thomas Clevendon and travelling throughout New South Wales. They followed the gold rush in 1850's and returned to Figtree in 1855.

- \* Mary Ann Organ was living with her husband John Buckland at Wollongong then moved to Figtree to farm near her parents Elias and Elizabeth's farm. Around 1852 they briefly moved to Bulli to farm, before returning to American Creek, Figtree.

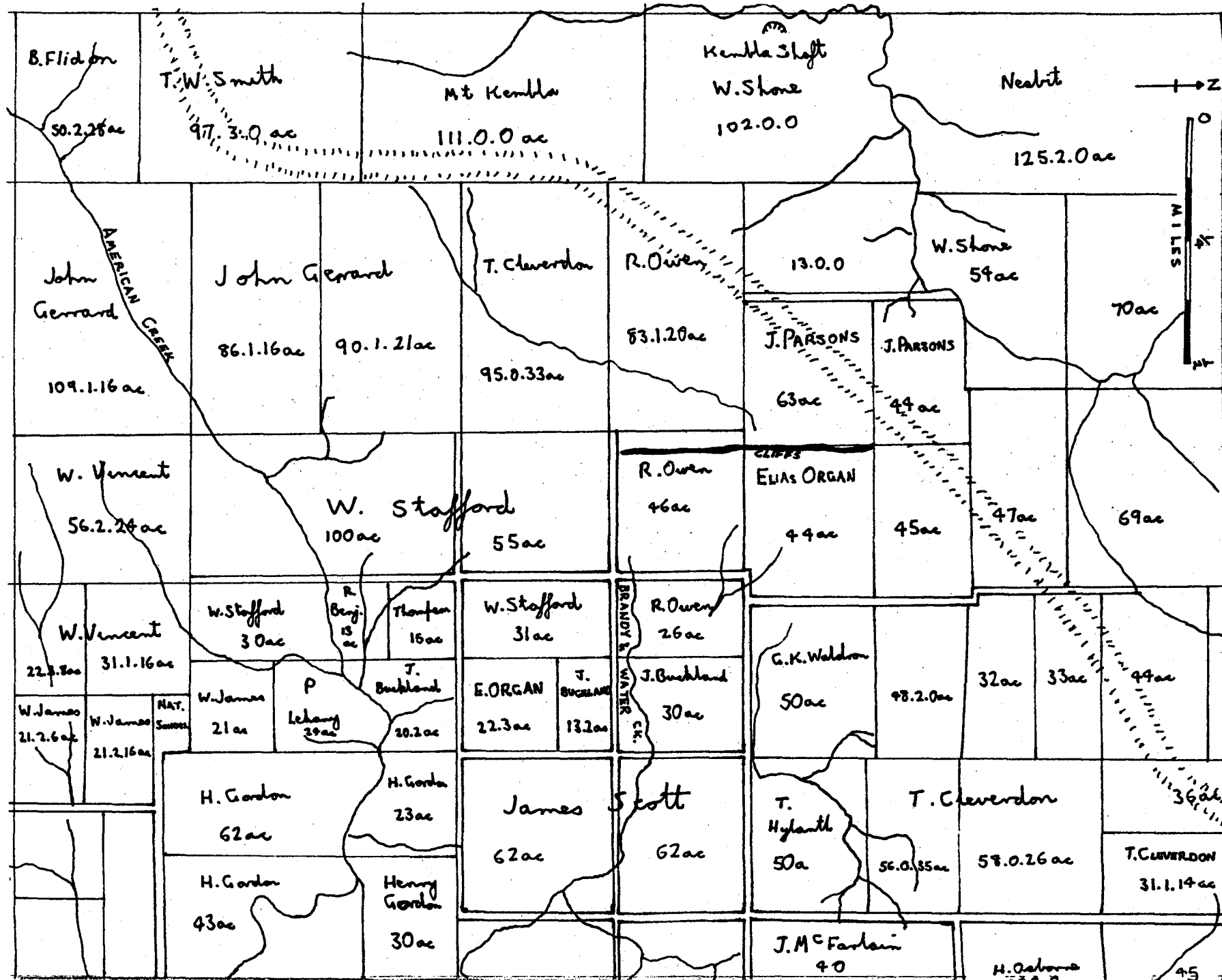
These then are brief summaries which will be expanded upon in due course. We can best look at the period in detail by dividing it chronologically as there was often a great deal of interplay between the various members of the family, as was to be expected. During this period the size of the family group had increased from 16 individuals in September 1839, to 53 by December 1855, ranging in ages from 3 months to 72 years of age.

#### 1842-1843: Farming for Survival

By 1842 Elias and Elizabeth Organ, both aged c.58, had only their youngest son Henry, aged 20, to take care of - all of their other children were married and had settled in the Illawarra district. Elias and Elizabeth turned their minds to retiring as old age approached. On the 3rd February Elias' purchase of land at Burelli Street, Wollongong, for £50 was registered. Elias and his son George were both builders and it was upon this land, part of Lot 7, Section 13, that they had built the two brick houses mentioned in the 1841 Census as occupied by Elias and William and their families. 1842 saw the onset of depression in the colony and Elias decided that the best way to weather the bad times and also to ensure a secure future would be to leave the town of Wollongong and settle on a farm somewhere in the surrounding districts. Therefore on the 16th May Elias mortgaged his house and land at Burelli Street to Thomas White for £150, using the money to set up a small farm at Figtree. We don't know when he left Wollongong but we do know that by the time of his son Henry's marriage in December 1843, Elias listed himself as a resident of Figtree. It appears that his daughter Mary Ann and new son-in-law John Buckland also left Wollongong to take up farming at Figtree, near American Creek and Brandy and Water Creek, about the same time as Elias and Elizabeth. Mary Ann's first son was born at Wollongong on 26th May 1842 and was named John Elias Buckland, after his father and grandfather. Sometime shortly after the birth of John Elias the Organ and Buckland families left Wollongong for a new life as farmers at Figtree. The sensible thing to do at that time was to leave Wollongong town and attain some self-sufficiency on a farm, as George and Thomas had done. Unless you were a storekeeper or tradesman, such as William, the only way to survive in the region during this period of depression was to take up farming and hope that you could live on what you produced. Fortunately the Illawarra region was especially kind to its early settlers, and as early as 1815 it had been termed "The Garden of New South Wales". Ample rainfall, numerous creeks and streams, a temperate climate and good soil, especially in the Dapto and Kiama areas, made for rich farming country. It was only the impenetrable nature of the Illawarra escarpment which stopped the region from being developed sooner.

In the 1840's and '50's wheat, potatoes, maize, corn, oats and sown grasses were also grown with success. Livestock such as cattle, pigs

MAP 3: EARLY SETTLERS OF THE MOUNT KEMBLA AREA





and horses thrived and the dairy industry developed. Only sheep were unsuccessful due to the damp climate. It was a wise decision on Elias' part to see out his final years as a farmer in the Figtree area.

Where was this farm? Even though no record exists of Elias buying land at Figtree in 1842-43, we do know that on 30th March 1853 he was granted a deed to 22 acres 2 roods at American Creek (see map 3). Elias paid £45 or £2 per acre for his land and although the deed states that he bought the land on the 29th October 1852 it is possible that he had settled on Crown Land back in 1842 and had been in possession for 10 years before he had the opportunity to purchase it at auction. Such was the system in those days that a person could live on or develop a farm on Crown Land for anything up to 20 years before the Government recognized title and handed over the deeds. Charles Throsby Smith had to wait twenty years from 1815 to 1835 before he was granted title to his land at Wollongong. Elias' 22 acres 2 roods was a relatively small area and could only have supported a small family. However from the map we can see that it was flanked by land owned by his son-in-law John Buckland. All up they had 85 acres on which to build a farm capable of supporting the two families.

William decided to remain in Wollongong, probably in one of his father's houses in Burelli Street, and carry on his trade of Cordwainer or boot and shoe maker. The 2nd July 1842 saw the second child of William and Mary Ann, a son Frederick, die at birth, just as their first son John Humphrey had suffered a similar fate ten months earlier. The 29th November saw the birth of a son Henry to Eliza Organ and Thomas Cleverdon, their first child.

As to the fortunes of George and Thomas during this period 1842-43 - we have no information on Thomas. However on the 2nd December 1843 George paid up his father's mortgage on the houses at Burelli Street for £195 and became the new owner. It is obvious that George's farming operation was making money - or he was using money he brought out with him from England. Whatever the case this is the first appearance of George's name in a land transaction. Over the next fifty six years, until his death in 1889, George was to be involved in many land deals in the region and judging by surviving records he appears to have been the real businessman of the family. The land records he and other members of the family left behind provide a rich source of genealogical information and fill in many gaps which would otherwise be lost forever in time.

This period 1842-43 was to end on a joyous note for the family with the marriage on Boxing Day, 26th December 1843, of Elias' son, Henry, to Miss Sarah Hurt of Wollongong. They were married in the Schoolhouse, i.e., St. Michael's Church of England, by the Rev. M.D. Meares. With the marriage of Henry, Elias and Elizabeth were now, at the age of 56, free of direct parental responsibilities, though they were surrounded by the beginnings of a large family group, for by this stage they already had nine grandchildren living in the Illawarra region.

### 1844: Depression

By 1844 the colony was in the grip of a severe depression, however the Organ family by this time had settled into life in their new country and were struggling through the bad times like everybody else. A severe drought (1842) followed by floods in 1843 had knocked the rest of New South Wales around however the Illawarra was not so badly affected. The influx of people into Wollongong from 1839-41 solved many of its labour shortage problems and greatly helped its development over the next decade. The 1840's were years of consolidation for the Illawarra and large areas of the region were cleared and cultivated. George, Thomas and Elias were a small part of this agricultural explosion.

The first Illawarra Agricultural and Horticultural Society was formed in 1844 indicating that times were not so hard amongst the Illawarra farming community. The Society's main instigators were resident landholders with large tracts of land in the Illawarra, such as the Osborne brothers Henry, John and Alick, C.T. Smith and Captain Westmacott.

With the coming of 1844 only William Organ and his family were still residing in Wollongong township. Henry Organ, now married to Sarah Hurt, was according to the Sydney Directory of 1844-45, a tailor at 81 Pitt Street, Sydney. He was to stay in Sydney until his untimely death in 1867 returning only briefly to Wollongong in 1854-55.

There were two new arrivals into the family during 1844. The first was a son to William and Mary Ann - their first to survive. He was born on 27th March and was given the rather lengthy name Edward Caro Craddock Organ after Mary Ann's father, Edward Craddock. This was followed on 15th June by the birth of Sarah Buckland, daughter of John Buckland and Mary Ann Organ at American Creek. 1844 also saw the signatures of members of the family on two local petitions. One petition, dated 30th April 1844 bears the signature of William Organ, who along with 64 other Wollongong citizens was calling upon the Governor Sir George Gipps, to cancel the order for the withdrawal of convict labour from the Wollongong Breakwater and to in fact carry on the work of excavating the harbour.

The second petition, of October 1844, signed by George, Elias and William Organ, called for help in joining the Sydney line of road, which had been completed to Coalcliff, to the Illawarra road which passed through the northern parts of the region. A road gang under Surveyor Drake was engaged in forming a road, actually a bridle track, to Mt. Keira along the top of the escarpment. The Governor travelled over the new line of road in March 1845 his object being to determine the best pass down the mountain into the region. After surveying the area and realizing that it would be no easy task to find a safe track down the escarpment, Governor Gipps travelled to Wollongong where he was treated to a civic reception and an address was made thanking him for visiting the region and showing an interest in its welfare. A copy of the address dated 5th March 1845 was presented to him and

signed by all those present at this gala occasion. Among those in attendance were George and William Organ. Alongside William's signature was the title "Boot and Shoe Maker", verifying his role in the Wollongong community at that time. These petitions also point to the development of Wollongong and surrounding districts as a community for the first time. Most of those who had come to Wollongong during the period 1839-41 had stayed on as farmers, merchants or labourers and the 1840s were to see the first real growth of Wollongong as the centre of a rural community.

#### 1845: Thomas Goes West

This year was marked by a number of births in the family.

On 1st February a daughter Priscilla was born to Thomas Cleverdon and Eliza Organ. Thomas Cleverdon stated his profession as a cooper, i.e., a maker or repairer of barrels and casks. Priscilla was baptized by the Wesleyan Minister, Fr. Benjamin Hurst.

On the 12th November Henry and Sarah had their first child, a son William, born at Kensington Street, Sydney. Henry at this stage was pursuing his career as a tailor. Unfortunately young William died six weeks later, at Parramatta Street, Sydney.

On the 4th December a daughter Elizabeth was born to Thomas and Honoria at Queanbeyan. This is the first hint we have of Thomas leaving the Illawarra. Elizabeth was baptized on Christmas Day, 1845, by Father Michael Kavanagh, the local Catholic Priest. Thomas stated his profession as labourer on the baptismal certificate. The question arises - why did Thomas and his family leave the Illawarra and head out west to the Queanbeyan region which at that time was undeveloped and largely unexplored? One of the reasons may have been that there were huge tracts of land available over the ranges waiting to be developed by industrious individuals - perhaps Thomas travelled to the Queanbeyan area as the employee of a squatter who already had large tracts of land in the area. One such Wollongong landholder was Henry Osborne Esq. of Marshall Mount. During the 1830's Henry Osborne had amassed large acreages of land in the Illawarra region. During the late 1830's he was one of the Overlanders, taking sheep and cattle across land to the new settlements in South Australia. During the 1840s he was granted large tracts of land in the Yass-Queanbeyan area. It is quite likely that Thomas and family travelled to Queanbeyan in the employ of a person such as Henry Osborne as labour was scarce and squatters usually paid good wages to labourers, shepherds or stockmen who were prepared to open up and develop these new lands outside the limit of the thirteen counties.

#### 1846: More Births

Marked only by two births; that of a son James to John Buckland and Mary Ann Organ, at Springvale near Figtree on the 2nd March, and also a daughter, Isabella Ann, to William and Mary Ann. Isabella Ann was born on 6th March 1846 at Wollongong and was the first daughter for Mary Ann and William. William was 35 years old at the time of Isabella Ann's birth, and Mary Ann was about 22 years old.

#### 1847: Thomas the Shepherd

The 21st January saw the birth of a daughter to Thomas and Honoria. At the time of the birth Thomas and family were living at Gundaroo, near Lake George, on the Yass River, and Thomas' stated profession was 'Shepherd'. They called their new daughter Elizabeth, obviously in memory of their other daughter Elizabeth who had been born on 4th December 1845 and had died in the meantime. Gundaroo was the name of a sheep run near Yass. Being a shepherd at that time and in that area involved a great deal of boredom and hardship looking after hundreds or thousands of sheep in areas completely isolated from civilization. The shepherds usually lived on a monotonous diet of mutton and damper as they crossed the runs with their flocks looking for food and water. It seems that Thomas was the adventurous member of the family, willing to try new things and prepared to leave the familiar confines of the Illawarra region for the newly discovered lands west of the Great Divide. However Thomas picked the wrong time to become a shepherd for in 1847 the Colony of New South Wales was still in the grip of the depression - the price of wool and mutton had fallen to an all-time low and boiling down of sheep became the norm throughout the land as graziers were forced to destroy their flocks rather than go broke trying to keep them. The only money to be made by sheep in the late 1840's was by boiling them down and selling the tallow to the markets in Great Britain. Thomas would also have had to deal with the aborigines, for as new lands were opened up it usually meant that the local aboriginal tribes were displaced. Armed conflict with these nomadic tribes was common because such was the view of the aborigines, that the white men and their strange animals were trespassers on their land and they had no qualms in killing sheep or cattle found grazing there. Though they only killed according to their needs, there were also incidents where shepherds and stockmen were killed for a variety of reasons. The fact remains that during the period 1845-51 when Thomas and his family were in the Yass region the isolation, the extreme climate and the aborigines were all predators.

The only other recorded event during 1847 was the birth of a daughter, Sarah Elizabeth, to Henry and Sarah at Castlereagh Street, Sydney.

#### 1848: Depression Continues

At the 1848 Census the population of the Illawarra region was 4210, compared with 4044 in 1841. The depressed economy had resulted in stagnation and lack of economic growth throughout the colony. The population of the Illawarra region had only changed by 176 in seven years. However the region was progressing, albeit at a very slow rate. Though there was no real population growth, those 4210 people in 763 different dwellings were all opening up the region by clearing land, planting crops, opening up new business and generally breathing life into the area. By the end of the 1840's the Illawarra was again being referred to as "The Garden of New South Wales" as it became a major supplier of dairy and agricultural products to Sydney and surrounding suburbs. We must remember that prior to about 1856 when coal became a major asset to the region, the Illawarra was in every

respect a farming community, with sizeable farms operating along its length and breadth from Bulli to Shellharbour and on top of the mountain range. Unfortunately "The Garden of New South Wales" has given rise to "The Steel City" and nothing much remains of that era of our local history, apart from scattered farms in the southern part of the region.

On the 9th February a son Thomas was born to Thomas Cleverdon and Eliza Organ, while on the 26th March a son, Albert Elias, was born to William and Mary Organ at William's "Boot and Shoe Warehouse" on the corner of Crown and Kembla Streets, Wollongong. Later in his life Albert Elias Organ was to reminisce about his father and those early years to the Illawarra Mercury (9th May 1924).

William's signature was also upon a petition dated 3rd May 1848 and signed by residents of Wollongong, Kiama and the Shoalhaven, calling for the completion of Sir Thomas Mitchell's road down the escarpment between Bulli and Corrimall mountains.

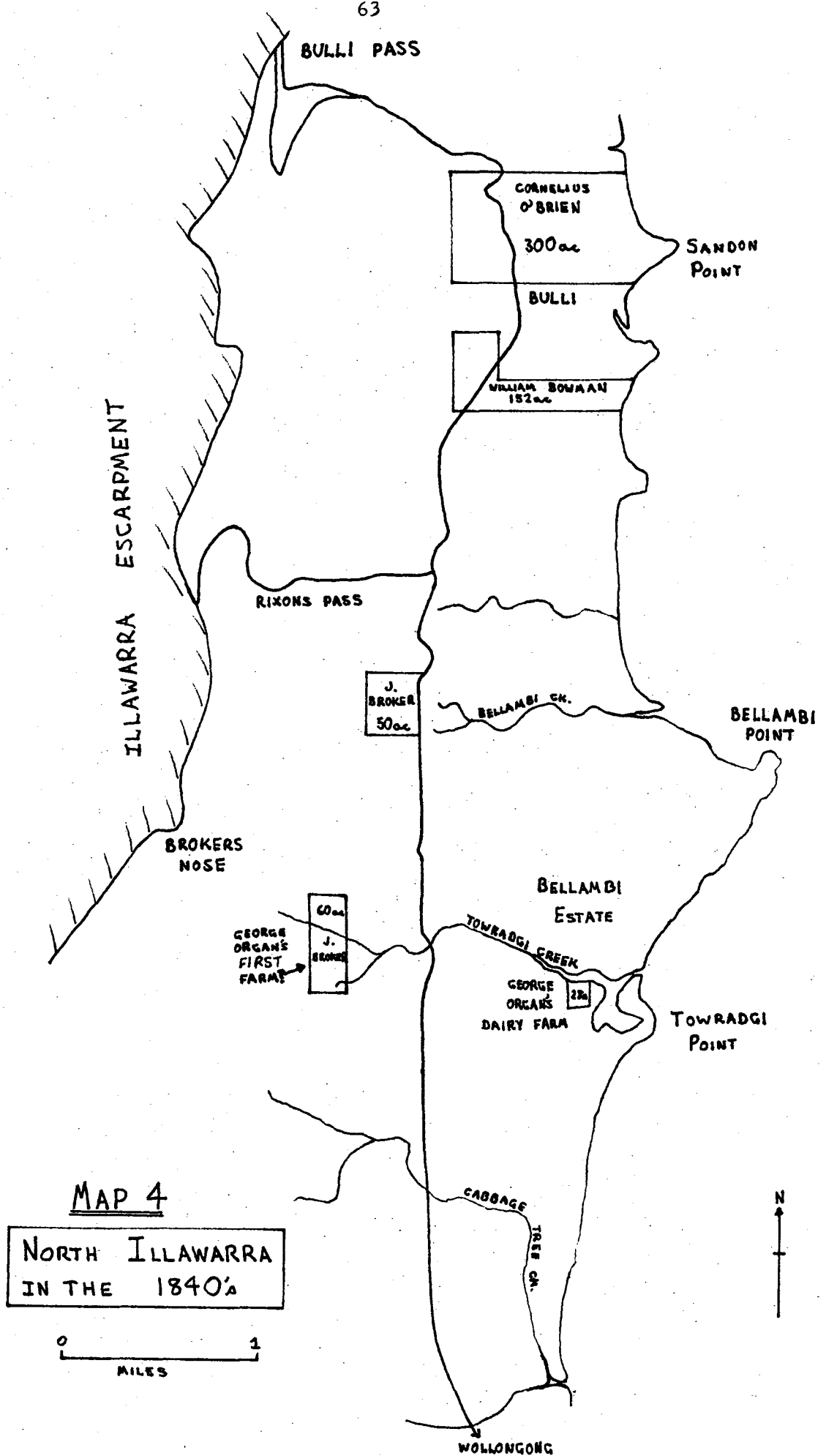
#### 1849: More Children, More Land

There were three new arrivals into the family during this year.

- (i) On the 27th June a girl, Hannah Agnes Fisher Organ, was born to Thomas and Honoriah at Kyamba Creek, Yass. Again Thomas states his profession as Shephard on the baptismal certificate. Hannah was baptized on the 5th May by Father P. McGinnes, the Roman Catholic Chaplain at Yass. Kyamba Creek was the name of a sheep run near Wagga Wagga.
- (ii) On the 7th October a daughter Mary Ann Eliza, was born to Henry and Sarah Organ at Sydney, however she was baptised on the 9th December in a Wesleyan ceremony by Rev John Bowes at Wollongong. Perhaps Henry and his family had the christening done while they were on holiday in Wollongong.
- (iii) On the 10th December Elizabeth Buckland, daughter of John Buckland and Mary Ann Buckland (nee Organ), was born at American Creek. She was probably named after her grandmother Elizabeth Organ.

#### George Organ's Farms at Bulli and Towradgi:

Perhaps the most important event to occur in 1849 was to involve George Organ. On the 10th March he purchased 152 acres at Fairy Meadow for the paltry sum of £164. This piece of land was to play a part in family affairs until the turn of the century and was the major land holding of the family in the Illawarra. In 1890, a year after George's death, his wife Maria was to donate a portion of this land for the building of Bulli Hospital, which was eventually opened on the 24th May 1893. The land was situated at Bulli (see accompanying map) though in 1849 all land north of Wollongong and south of Cornelius O'Brien's land at Bulli was often referred to as Fairy Meadow. The land had originally been granted to William Bowman on the 11th August 1841, however when Bowman died on the 20th October 1848 his wife decided to sell the land and George happened to be on hand to make a



very astute purchase. He paid a deposit of £42 and was eventually given full title to the land on the 13th November 1850. What George did with this land immediately after purchase is not known, however we can assume that it was used for farming. On the conveyance George states his occupation as "Farmer of Fairy Meadow" though whether this meant that he was already farming the 152 acres or some other land in the Fairy Meadow area is open to conjecture. In attempting to discover George's occupation during the 1840's we can use the following pieces of information.

1. In March 1841, according to the Census, he was farming at Fairy Meadow on land owned by James Brooker (or Broker).
2. On the 7th September 1854 a conveyance was registered for the purchase by George Organ of a 28 acre farm, part of the Bellambi Estate (see Map) for £150.11.4. Just over 12 months later, on the 14th November 1855 George sold the same 28 acre farm to Thomas Sulway, a local farmer, for £700.
3. On the 18th August 1856 the following advertisement appeared in the Illawarra Mercury:

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Farm to Let on Lease

That eligible Dairy Farm at Towrodger, formerly the property of Mr George Organ, together with 60 acres adjoining; the whole is securely fenced in, well watered and has on it a comfortable Cottage fit for a respectable tenant, to whom one third of the rent will be remitted for improvements made during the lease. Apply to the undersigned.

Robert Davidson  
Mount St. Thomas

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A number of interpretations can be made from this information, one being as follows: According to the 1884 Parish of Wonona map, James Brooker owned at one stage 60 acres at Towradgi Creek and 50 acres at Bellambi. As there are no extant land records of George buying any land off Mr Brooker it is possible that during the early forties he was leasing Mr Brooker's 60 acres at Towradgi Creek, in an area generally referred to as Fairy Meadow or Para-Meadow. On the 4th May 1842 the Bellambi Estate was put on the market, comprising 2000 acres of land initially owned by James and Harriet Spearing but sold to Lieutenant Colonel John Thomas Leahy in December 1835. When Colonel Leahy died, his heir Daniel Leahy decided to subdivide the property and put it into the hands of the Campbell Bros. of Sydney as trustees to sell as they saw fit. It is probable that at some stage between May 1842 and September 1854 George purchased Lot 31 of the Bellambi Estate (see Map) and developed the property as a dairy farm, in the meantime building a "comfortable cottage fit for a respectable tenant" on the land. Lot 31 was a choice site with frontages to Towradgi Creek on the north and a reserved road on the west. George's payment of \$150.11.4 on 7th September 1854 could represent his final instalment, plus interest, on the property, for it seems strange that

the land could jump in value from £150.11.4 to £700 a mere 13 months later. The implication is that the £150.11.4 was part payment or George had been in possession of the land for a number of years. Whatever the case we can assume that George left the farm sometime between May and the 14th November 1855, on which date he sold the property to Thomas Sulway, who in turn advertised it "To Let on Lease" in August of 1856. On the conveyance at the time of sale, George lists himself as "Farmer of Wollongong" indicating that he took up residence in Wollongong after selling his Towradgi farm. What of his 152 acre farm at Bulli? It is possible that he leased this property out after purchase, however it is unfortunate that leasee details were never officially recorded (except upon the lost Census forms), so that a practice which was quite common throughout the Illawarra region at that time is now almost forgotten. Who, if anyone, leased and farmed the Bowman Estate at Bulli during the years 1840-50 before George purchased it? A similar question could be asked of many other estates throughout the region, where it was the leasee farmer who developed the land which was often owned by non-resident landlords. The names and achievements of these leasee farmers, many of whom were ex-convicts and bounty immigrants, will never be known. They were some of the real pioneers of the Illawarra, however when we talk of pioneers it is almost invariably in terms of the large landowners such as J.S. Spearing, Jemima Waldron, Captain Westmacott, C.T. Smith and the Osborne Brothers and not in terms of the individual farmers who actually worked the land and developed the region's agricultural and dairy industries to such a high degree. They are mostly forgotten in time.

#### 1850: Consolidation

Another quiet year. All we have concerning the family is the birth on the 9th January of a daughter Clara Jane to William and Mary Ann Organ at Crown Street Wollongong, probably in the living quarters connected with William's shoe store. She was baptized on the 3rd March by the Church of England minister, Rev. M.D. Meares. Clara Jane was Mary Ann's fourth surviving child and William's eighth.

1850 also saw the birth of a daughter Elizabeth to Thomas and Eliza Cleverdon on the 6th July at Figtree, possibly at their farm (see Map 3).

#### 1851: Gold!

This was an important year in the history of the Colony for on the 15th May 1851 the Sydney Morning Herald announced that Edward Hargraves had discovered gold near Bathurst. This was to mark the end of the economic gloom which had hung over the colony since 1842. The discovery of gold in New South Wales and Victoria during 1851-54 was to revitalize the economy of the colony and put it on a sound footing. Immigration from Europe, America and Asia increased as people flocked to the goldfields while many locals left the cities and towns of the coast, including Wollongong, looking for fame and fortune 'outback'. The influx of people into the Colony as a result of the goldrush was to supply a much-needed labour force for future expansion



of Australia's developing industries, such as agriculture, sheep and cattle. There had been a general labour shortage during the forties and this was one of the reasons why Thomas and his family left Wollongong and headed out to the Yass area to work as a shephard. The goldrush had the effect of injecting a large dose of excitement and optimism for the future into the towns and cities not directly connected with the goldfields. Gold was an asset recognized world wide and its discovery in Australia helped to lessen the sense of isolation felt by many of the colony's inhabitants, a number of whom were still homesick for their native Britain. Gold was a symbol of independence, as was shown by the happenings at the Eureka stockade. So it was that with the discovery of gold in 1851 the economy of the colony was revived and economic growth could once again occur. Initially Wollongong saw many of its families head off towards the goldfields - one such family being the Cleverdons, however Eliza Cleverdon (née Organ) was the only member of the Organ family to go gold prospecting, as far as we know. The rest of the family remained in the Illawarra and carried on their various farming and business activities, while Henry remained a tailor in Sydney for a period.

There was only one birth in the family during 1851, that being a daughter Emily Craddock, born to William and Mary Ann Organ at Crown Street Wollongong on the 11th October. At the time of Emily's birth William was 41 and Mary Ann was 27. She was baptized on the 23rd November by Rev. M.D. Meares at St. Michael's Church of England, Wollongong.

The only other momento during this year is of a local petition signed by William Organ sometime during February and calling for the Governor to provide funds for the completion of a road from Wollongong, up the escarpment at Dapto and across the range to Berrima. The petitions are very interesting as the names contained therein identify important people in Wollongong at that time and also William's neighbours. Some of the "Magistrates, Landed Proprietors and others, residents of Illawarra", who signed this petition in February 1851 included Charles Throsby Smith, Henry Osborne, Robert Haworth, Edward Elliott, Matthew Ryan, Alexander Elliott, John Osborne, Thomas Cleverdon and William Organ. Those and many others named on the various petitions of that era are some of the true pioneers of the Illawarra, responsible for opening up and developing the region during its first few decades. It should be noted that as Wollongong and surrounding districts developed during the 1840s and '50s, high on the list of priorities of the members of its community was the development of adequate roads and shipping services into and out of the district, all of which would help to remove the sense of isolation felt by the people of the district due to the presence of the Illawarra escarpment and lack of any fine harbours. These problems of isolation would stay with the Illawarra for many decades to come.

#### 1852: Thomas Comes Home

This year opened on a sad note for the family of William and Mary Ann Organ, when their 2-year old daughter Clara Jane died on the 4th January. Her cause of death is unknown. She was buried on the 5th by

Reverend Meares. Clara Jane was the 3rd child of Mary Ann Organ (née Spittal Craddock) to die at a young age. Perhaps the death of a young child was more common during those times, however that wouldn't have made it any easier to bear.

1852 saw the return of Thomas Organ and family to the Illawarra for on the 14th July a son, Thomas Henry Fisher, was born to Thomas and Honoria at Wollongong. He was baptized on the 1st July by the local Catholic priest Father T. Murray. Exactly when and why Thomas left Yass is unknown, as also is his occupation upon returning to Wollongong - it is possible that he took up farming on George's property at Bulli.

William was to lose another daughter in 1852, however the circumstances were not as tragic as was the death of Clara Jane. On the 18th August, William's eldest daughter Sarah Emily, then aged 18 years, married John Davis, Chief Constable, of Harbour Street, Wollongong. John and Sarah were married by Rev. M.D. Meares at St. Michael's Church, Wollongong, in the presence of William Organ of Crown Street and Thomas Evans of Market Square. The circumstances of the marriage are revealed by the fact that less than 2 months later John and Sarah became parents to a daughter Maria Jane - she was born on the 11th October at their abode in Harbour Street. It is quite possible that young Maria Jane was born in the living quarters attached to the Court House-Lockup situated in Harbour Street, seeing as John Davis was Chief Constable for Wollongong at that time. It was within these same buildings that Sarah Emily's mother Eliza Best had died in 1840, for the Lock-up was in fact the old military stockade used when William was a member of the 28th. After the emancipation of the convicts the Justice Department of New South Wales secured the Stockade as the Police Lockup. The old building had high wooden walls with broken glass bottles cemented into a big beam on the top. It is ironic that the place of William's beloved wife, Eliza's, death should also be the place of birth of his first grandchild, Maria Jane.

October of 1852 also saw the birth of another Maria into the family, namely a daughter born to John and Mary Ann Buckland on the 25th October at Bulli. The question arises as to why John and Mary Ann were living at Bulli at that time when their house and farm was at Figtree, next door to Elias and Elizabeth's. The sojourn to Bulli must have been brief for John and Mary Buckland were to spend the rest of their lives at Figtree.

The 15th November saw the arrival of a daughter to Thomas and Eliza Cleverdon. The girl was born at Ophir on the New South Wales goldfields and was given the name Sofala. Evidently Thomas had been struck by gold fever!

It was also around this time that Elias was given the chance to purchase the Crown Land upon which he had been living since 1843, for on the 29th October there was a public auction and Elias paid £2 an acre for his 22½ acres at Figtree. The land was officially granted to him 5 months later on the 30th March, 1853, so that finally, at the age of 67 years he could feel secure knowing that he owned a little piece of Australia.

### 1853: Births, Marriage and More Land

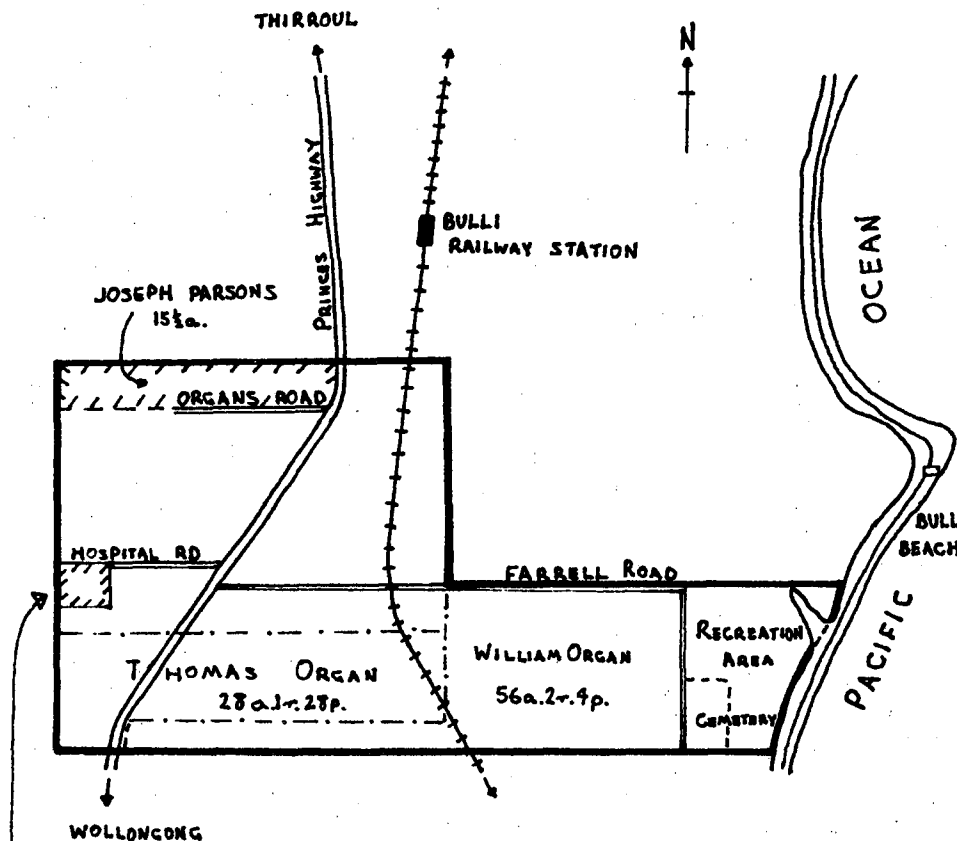
The decade from 1853 until 1863 was to prove extremely eventful for the family of Elias and Elizabeth Organ. During these years the various members of the family were all, at one time or another, living and working in the Illawarra as farmers, boot and shoe makers, tailors, publicans, buildings, dressmakers and storekeepers. Throughout that decade the Organ family were indeed active members of the thriving Illawarra community. In 1853 Elias celebrated his sixty ninth birthday and surviving records seem to indicate that he was still very active, physically and mentally, during his later years. William was 43, George 41 and Thomas was 39.

1853 was to see a marriage, two births and numerous land dealings occur among members of the family. The marriage was between George Organ's daughter, Emily, and James Rixon, son of Benjamin Rixon, a famous early pioneer of the Illawarra. James and Emily were married on the 10th March at St Michael's by the ever-present Reverend Matthew Devenish Meares, in the presence of George Organ of Para-Meadow and Henry John Rixon of Berkeley. George also was soon to become a grandfather for nine months later William and Emily had a son, William, born on the 20th November and the first of 12 children for the couple.

The other birth during 1853 was a daughter to William and Mary Ann, born on 4th September at Kembala Street, Wollongong. William and Mary named their new daughter Clara Jane in memory of the child they had lost 18 months previously. At the time of the birth William and his family were still living in premises attached to his bootmakers shop on the corner of Crown and Kembala Street, Wollongong - opposite the National School (site of the present Town Hall).

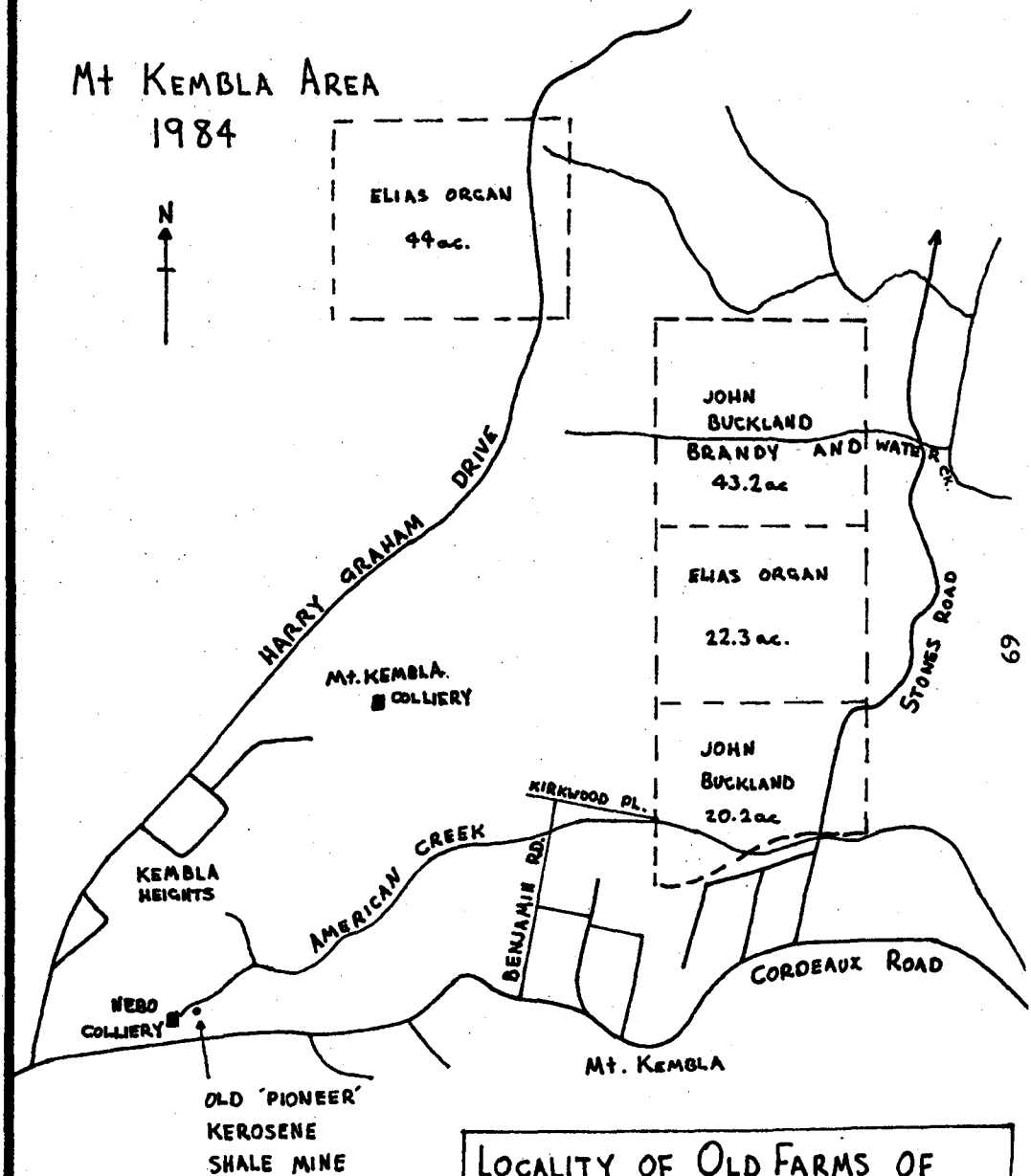
There were a number of land dealings amongst members of the family during 1853 as follows:

- \* On the 22nd July George received the title deeds for 4 acres 2 roods he had purchased in the area of Church and Swan Streets, Wollongong, for £29.5.0 on the 15th February. This had been Crown Land.
- \* On the 1st December George purchased 2 acres 2 roods on the corner of Church and Swan Streets, Wollongong, for £7.10.0, from James Brooker, Butcher, of Wollongong. This was the same James Brooker who was renting a farm to George at the time of the 1841 Census.
- \* On the 24th October Elias Organ attended a public auction of allotments fronting Coombe Street, Wollongong, between Crown and Market Streets. Elias bought Lots 22-25 for £20.12.0. Why, you ask? Remember that Elias was a carpenter, George was also a builder and George's new son-in-law James Rixon, was a building contractor. It is therefore possible that Elias bought the allotments as investments or to build on at a later stage. Judging by later events it seems that the former reason was more likely,



PRESENT LOCATION AND  
INITIAL SUBDIVISIONS OF  
GEORGE ORGAN'S 152ac.  
AT BULLI MAP 5

## Mt KEMBLA AREA 1984



LOCALITY OF OLD FARMS OF  
ELIAS ORGAN & JOHN BUCKLAND

for by 1st August 1855, Elias had sold the Lots to John Witt, a farmer of Bulli, for £40, who in turn sold them to Jemima Waldron of Mount Saint Thomas for £45.

- \* On the 15th October, Thomas Cleverdon purchased 9 acres at Figtree, Lot No.1 of the Mount Keera Estate, for £143.11.4. Elias was later to purchase this land from Thomas Cleverdon, his son-in-law.
- \* Finally, on 3rd November we have a very interesting set of land transactions involving George, Thomas and William Organ. On this day the legal conveyancing was carried out whereby
  - (i) Thomas Organ purchased 28 acres 1 rood 28 perches of land, part of his brother George's 152 acres at Bulli, for £36. Both George and Thomas stated their professions as Farmers at the time.
  - (ii) William Organ sold 56 acres 2 roods, 4 perches, being land he had recently purchased from his brother George. William bought the land, part of George's 152 acres at Bulli, for £50, and sold it to A.H. McCulloch, a Sydney solicitor, for £200.

The circumstances behind these deals are unknown but they raise many questions. Why did William, a bootmaker, buy land from his brother and then sell it shortly after for a healthy profit? Why did George sell the land to his brothers for such trifling amounts?

The close of 1853 therefore sees Thomas farming at Bulli; William still in business at Wollongong but with a bit more collateral; George still farming at Fairy Meadow and starting to amass properties throughout the district; and finally old Elias, still living at Figtree, also getting involved in land speculation. We should at all times remember that in the early days of the colony not all land transactions were registered with the Registrar General - such that the Organ land records herein discussed may not tell the whole story.

#### 1854: All Together Again

Henry Organ and his family (wife Sarah and daughters Sarah and Mary Ann) returned to Wollongong early in 1854 after having spent over ten years learning the trade of tailor in Sydney. On the 14th January Henry's first son to survive childhood was born at Crown Street Wollongong. He was named Elias after his grandfather. Once again the circumstances of Henry's return to Wollongong are unknown, however it seems likely that he opened up a tailor shop in Crown Street upon his arrival with the hopes of securing a future in Wollongong. This was not to be, however.

The only other recorded events during this year concern George and his purchases of land. During 1854 he purchased the following:

- \* On the 9th August, a Crown Street allotment for £50, only to sell it later to Samuel Cutcher, a shoemaker of Wollongong, for £70.

- \* On the 30th September, some Coombe Street allotments, for £36.
- \* On 7th September, the final payment (?) of £150.11.4 on his 28 acre farm at Towradgi.

It appears as though George Organ was becoming somewhat of a real estate agent and land developer judging by his increasing activity in that area.

1854 is perhaps best remembered for the conflict at the Eureka Stockade near Ballarat on the 3rd December. Things were a bit quieter in Wollongong!

#### 1855: Henry Organ - Insolvent

This was to be a rather eventful year for the family and its various members and events are best dealt with on an individual basis due to the increase in information available for that year.

Elias and Elizabeth turned 71 in 1855. On the 1st August they sold their Coombe Street allotments for £40. Elias stated his profession as farmer at the time. According to the electoral lists of the Wollongong district for the year 1855-56, probably compiled around the middle of 1855, Elias is listed as a freeholder, i.e., landowner, resident at American Creek, Figtree.

William in those same lists is mentioned as a freeholder of Crown Street, Wollongong, i.e., residing at his shoe store. William's second grandchild was born on the 10th April at Molong to John and Sarah Emily Davis. They named the child Eliza Best Davis in honour of Sarah's mother and William's first wife. Also around this time, on the 9th of April, William and Eliza's last child Maria, married Michael Fishlock of Brandy and Water Creek. Maria and Michael were joined together by the Presbyterian Minister C. Atchinson in a ceremony at the house of Elias Organ at American Creek. Maria was 15 years old at the time of her marriage.

George was a busy man during 1855. On the 3rd January his son William Henry married Anne Grover of Wollongong. The ceremony was performed by Cunningham Atchinson, the local Presbyterian minister, and took place in George's house at Fairy Meadow. Interestingly George gives his occupation as Tailor on the marriage certificate though he never seems to have pursued this profession while in Australia. George's land dealings during 1855 included:

- \* On 8th March he sold 15½ acres at Bulli, part of the 152 acres, to Joseph Parsons for £31. Joseph was the son of Thomas Parsons and Sarah Organ - Sarah being the sister of Elias Organ, therefore Joseph Parsons was George Organ's 1st cousin. Joseph had arrived in Australia on board the Bussorah Merchant along with Elias Organ and family in 1839. Joseph's 15½ acres was in the vicinity of the present-day Organs Road at Bulli. It was eventually developed as a small farm and market garden. Joseph also owned land close to Elias Organ's land at Figtree (see Map3).

- \* On the 21st May George sold 4 acres 2 roods at Church and Swan Streets, Wollongong, for £50.
- \* On the 14th November he sold his Towradgi dairy farm for £700, as previously mentioned.

The 1855-56 electoral rolls list George as a freeholder of Crown Street, indicating that upon selling his farm he moved into a house of his own in Wollongong. George's son William Henry is listed as a leasee, "near the Bulli Road", suggesting that George was renting part of his property at Bulli to his newly married son.

Thomas is listed in the 1855-56 Electoral Rolls as a 'freeholder near Bulli', i.e., living on the 28 acre farm which he purchased from George in 1853.

By 1855 Thomas and Eliza Cleverdon had returned to Figtree after their jaunt on the goldfields, for on the 3rd September they had a daughter, Louisa, born at Figtree.

John and Mary Ann Buckland had returned to Figtree when their third son George was born on the 20th August at American Creek.

The final member of Elias' family, namely Henry, did not have a very good time in 1855 for on the 17th May he declared himself bankrupt, or insolvent, as was the common term at that time.

#### Henry Organ's Insolvency 17th May, 1855:

Though Henry's insolvency was the first, it wasn't the last to occur among members of the family - between 1840 and 1900 the following insolvencies were recorded:

Name and Occupation	Date
Henry Organ of Wollongong, Tailor	17th May 1855
Thomas Organ of Wollongong, late innkeeper	24th September 1860
William Organ of Wollongong, Shoemaker	18th December 1860
William Henry Organ of Wollongong, Storekeeper	28th January 1862
Honoria Organ of Houlahans near Wagga, Widow	29 March 1871
George Organ* of Ulladulla, Bootmaker	19 November 1880
William Organ of Milton, Boot and Shoe Manufacturer	4 December 1883
* Humphrey George, son of William, not Elias' son.	

Insolvency during the nineteenth century was often claimed over trifling amounts and could result in the insolvent and his/her family losing all their belongings, including the very clothes off their backs, in order to satisfy their creditors. From the above list we can see that George alone of Elias' sons escaped insolvency during his lifetime. Many of the Illawarra's earliest pioneers had faced insolvency, e.g., Charles Thosby Smith, Captain Robert Marsh Westmacott, Alexander Elliott, so perhaps bankruptcy was more common in the 1800's than in present times. Were the Organ brothers, apart

from George, bad businessmen or just unlucky? Whatever the case, the declaration of bankruptcy was not a pleasant affair and was bound to leave scars. Whenever a member of the family declared bankruptcy he invariably left the town the bankruptcy occurred in shortly thereafter, suggesting that in fact insolvency was a very painful, socially demoralizing experience.

The act of insolvency and its consequences usually involved the following:

1. A summons is served by a Creditor asking for payment of a debt.
2. The insolvent, being unable to pay, declares insolvency.
3. An Official Assignee is appointed and the insolvency is declared in the Government Gazette.
4. A Creditors meeting is held and the insolvent's assets are divided up amongst the creditors.

The insolvent is usually left with nothing and is often forced to leave town and start a new life elsewhere. The Creditors are usually left with only a fraction of what they are owed.

In Henry's case a creditors meeting was held on the 2nd June 1855 at Supreme Court House, Sydney. At that meeting the following Creditors and their due debts were presented:

Creditors	Debt	Amount
Vingenzo Lahel, Tailor of Sydney	For goods sold	£31. 2. 2
Messrs George Hewlett and George Wearing, Storekeepers of Wollongong	For goods supplied	£52. 6. 8
James Hetherington of Wollongong	For goods supplied	£ 7.17. 0
Mark Spence, Draper, of Sydney	For goods supplied	£27.12. 9
		<u>£118.18. 7</u>

By the 16th June, Mr Hewlett & Co had sold all of Henry's assets and collected some of his bad debts, to the amount of £23.19.0. Of this money £15.15.0 was used to pay the rent of premises occupied by Henry and his family; £3.3.0 was paid to the Official Assignee; 13/- in Court Fees, and finally Henry's creditors received a total amount of £4.8.0, i.e., 8 7/8d in the £. Following the initial meeting on 2nd June: "The Creditors allowed the insolvent to retain the Wearing apparel of his children, also the bedding of the children, and directed the official assignee to sell the insolvent's furniture and the wearing apparel of himself and wife." As we can see the Creditors left Henry virtually destitute. The most revealing part of the Archives Office records of Henry's insolvency is a transcript of Henry's testimony when he was questioned by George Hewlett at the Creditors' meeting. He was asked to explain his insolvency, part of his answer follows, as recorded:

"I attribute my insolvency to losing my house I was carrying on business in (and living within the back part). I was deprived of my store, which also stopped my working, and not being able to sell my goods at the proper prices. The goods Mr Hewlett has supplied me has been cloth. I have had the



same type of goods from other persons ... I do not owe my father any money. I borrowed money from him which has accumulated in work from him. I do not owe my father-in-law any money. Sometimes I partake of a little ale at 11 o'clock and sometimes a little brandy before going to bed. Previous to my insolvency I sold a chest of drawers and received part of the money, some of which was spent doing my business, the remainder is in my schedule. I sold them to James Rixon for £8, £6 of which I received. The chest of drawers were removed from the house whilst I was in Sydney filing my schedule....they were sold."

This testimony along with the other documents reveal many interesting aspects of Henry's life. He seems to have had few possessions or anything much to show for his 10 years work in Sydney. All told his assets only realized £23.19.0. From his testimony there is the suggestion that he borrowed money from members of his family and perhaps squandered some of it on the demon drink. Henry's attempt to run a successful tailor shop in Wollongong had failed and shortly thereafter he returned to Sydney.

The years 1842-55 had proven quite eventful for the family of Elias and Elizabeth Organ. Though the information is scarce the picture does emerge of the family's experience in New South Wales during those years - they were not good years for the colony as a whole, but the Organs stuck it out and obviously decided that a depressed New South Wales was better than their hometown of Dursley. Wollongong, and the Illawarra region generally, had progressed slowly during those years - when a census was taken in 1856 the population of the region was 4506, compared with 4046 in 1841, i.e., an increase of only 460 people in 13 years. Though the population had remained steady there had been major changes throughout the region as more and more of those new settlers and ex-convicts who arrived in Wollongong in the early 1840s took to the land and developed numerous farms throughout the district. By the end of 1855 the Illawarra district was progressing nicely as a farming community with Wollongong as its main port and commercial centre. It would have remained a sleepy rural area except for one thing - the discovery and successful exploitation of coal after 1855.

## CHAPTER 5

1856-62  
The Richest Years

These seven years were to prove the richest, genealogically speaking, in this study of the Organ family, mainly due to the fact that the Illawarra's first local newspaper appeared on the 8th October 1855, and the earliest surviving copies are dated 7th January 1856. During the years 1856-62 all of Elias' children and their families, save for Henry and his family, were residing in the district. During that period:

- \* Elias and Elizabeth remained on their farm at Figtree.
- \* William and family remained in Wollongong carrying on the boot and shoe-making business.
- \* George moved to Wollongong from whence he carried out his various enterprises, from farming, to builder, to publican.
- \* Thomas farmed at Bulli for a few years then became an innkeeper in Wollongong.
- \* Henry and family returned to Sydney, where he was employed as a tailor once again.
- \* Mary Ann and her husband John Buckland, carried on farming at Figtree.
- \* Eliza and Thomas Cleverdon also lived at Figtree for a number of years before moving to Young in 1861.

These are brief summaries of the whereabouts of Elias Organ's family between the years 1856-62 and will be expanded upon in due course.

The appearance of the Illawarra Mercury, and the survival of the majority of its earliest editions<sup>1</sup>, was to throw a whole new light onto our view of life in nineteenth century Illawarra. If only a local paper had appeared 16 years earlier! The records contained within the pages of the Mercury are extremely important because they give us a rich supplement to the official records (i.e., birth death and marriage certificates, land transactions, etc). Many pieces of information from the files of the Illawarra Mercury will be cited in the following sections of this family history. When the Mercury appeared in 1855 the Illawarra region was basically a farming community, however by 1862 the first coalmines in the region were successfully operating and would forever change the rural character of the district.

1856: A Local Newspaper at Last

One of the earliest surviving copies of the Mercury, dated 4th February 1856, contains the following advertisement:

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1. Missing Illawarra Mercurys: 8.10.1855-1.1.1856 and 1.10-1856-31.12.1856.

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### Boots and Shoes

W. Organ begs to inform the inhabitants of Wollongong and the district generally that he has on hand a fresh supply of new and seasonable goods at moderate prices at the

#### WOLLONGONG BOOT AND SHOE WHAREHOUSE Crown Street, Wollongong

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This advertisement was probably for his store on the corner of Crown and Kembla Streets. Note the language of the advertisement. Here we finally have proof that William ran a business in Wollongong and even though he may have been doing so since 1840 this is the first description of the business that we have.

Another little Mercury tit-bit appeared on the 14th April and was a list of names, including William's, under the heading "Receipts and Expenditures of the Illawarra Race Meeting, October 1855. Subscriptions and Qualifications." This is interesting because in its early days the Illawarra was called the most sporting district in the colony, with horse racing, cricket and athletic sports being the most popular. Game hunting was also popular with the region often being termed a sportsman's paradise. The densely brushed gullies were the home of numerous species of pigeon, lyre bird (then termed pheasant), parrot, cockatoo, wallaby, cat bird and scrub turkey. Down in the swamps, lakes and creeks could be found black, wood and musk ducks, teal and black swan, red-bill, water hens and curlew. Right up until the mid-1860s game was plentiful right up to Wollongong and it was common for settlers to head off armed with an ordinary single barrel muzzle-loading gun and after a few hours of hunting around Tom Thumb lagoon to return with a bag full of parrots, a pigeon or two and some teal duck to brighten up the dinner table.

While hunting could have been termed a necessary part of everyday life, horse-racing was by far the most popular sport, being present from the first days of the settlement. The following announcement appeared in the "Australian" of February 2, 1835:

A meeting of settlers took place at the Crown Inn, Wollongong, for the purpose of establishing races in that district. It was resolved that the first meeting should take place on March 17, 1835."

The site for the racecourse was about 2 miles south of Wollongong town by Tom Thumb lagoon. The first meeting fully reported, and also probably witnessed by members of the newly-arrived Organ family, occurred on 7th April, 1840. The names of the participants and officials at that meeting reads like a who's-who of early Illawarra founding fathers. The annual race meeting was the principal holiday time of the year and the top occasion on the social calendar. Though the meetings were organized by the local "toffs" and so-called "landed gentry", every man from ex-convict and bounty immigrant to those self-same "toffs" participated in the three day racing carnival. In 1842 an Illawarra Race Club was formed with subscriptions of £1 from each member. This was eventually replaced by the Illawarra Turf Club which held its inaugural meeting on the 19th and 20th April 1848. By

1855 the I.T.C. was holding its meeting during the October long weekend, and it was this meeting which was the first to be reported in the Illawarra Mercury. At this meeting George Organ's son-in-law James Rixon raced his horse Lucy Long. William Organ subscribed £1.10.0 to the meeting, perhaps indicating that he took part in one of the races.

As for the family, William and Mary Ann were blessed with another son on the 1st May. They named him Humphrey George Organ.

During 1856 George was once again involved in a number of land dealings, including

- \* Selling a Wollongong town lot for £50 on 30th January.
- \* Buying some Coombe Street allotments for £35 on 15th February.

On 18th August George's old dairy farm at Towrodger (sic) was advertised for lease in the Mercury, as mentioned previously. George's name is also contained on a list of subscribers to the Illawarra Agricultural Society as published in the Mercury on the 17th November. This list contains the names of the major farmers in the district at that time. Charles Throsby Smith, J.P., was Chairman of the I.A.S. according to the list. George's subscription was 10/-, while Henry Osborne, one of the major landowners in the Illawarra, subscribed £5.5.0. Thomas Cleverdon also subscribed 10/-, suggesting that both himself and George Organ, along with the others on the list, were commercial farmers at that time.

Thomas Organ, who was farming at Bulli during 1856, or possibly operating a store, did not have his name upon the list of I.A.S. members. Thomas however was busy during the latter half of the year, for on the 8th December he sold the farm he had bought from George in 1853. Thomas sold the 28 acre farm at Bulli to Denis Mealy of Sydney for £450, though he had paid George only £36 for the land when he purchased it three years previously. If only we knew the circumstances behind that massive appreciation in value! Two days later, on 10th December, Thomas purchased a 51 acre farm at Bulli from Charles Jenkins of Wollongong for £408. The land was on the western side of the main road from Wollongong. Perhaps Thomas purchased a shop or a valuable farm with his £408.

#### 1857: Good Times

On the 27th March, Elias Organ, almost 74 years old, sold his 22½ acre farm at Figtree to his son-in-law John Buckland. Elias sold the land to John for a token £45, the same price he had paid for it. This deal points to the close ties developed between Elias and Elizabeth and their son-in-law and family. They had both moved to the Figtree area at about the same time during the early 1840s and probably farmed together. By formally purchasing the 22½ acres John now had an 85 acre tract of land on which to farm and support his growing family, for on the 25th October John and Mary Ann Buckland became parents for the seventh time, Mary Ann giving birth to a daughter Eleanor.

The other new arrivals into the family group during 1857 included a daughter Marianne Amelia, born to Henry and Sarah Organ at Clarence Street, Sydney, on the 10th of August; and also on the 25th December a son John James was born to Thomas and Eliza Cleverdon at Figtree.

As for Thomas Organ and family - they spent 1857 on their farm at Bulli. Their sixth child, a girl by the name of Werburgha, was born on the 3rd February at Bulli. Later in the year, on the 25th August, Thomas obtained a £100 loan, with his farm as collateral, from Ebenezer Bourne, a Gentleman of Paddington. Most likely the loan was towards improvements on his farm at Bulli.

William turned 47 in July and 2 months later, on the 7th September, his daughter Elizabeth, then aged 20 years, married Alfred Mayo at the newly opened Congregation Church in Wollongong. The ceremony was performed by George Charter and was the 4th marriage ceremony to take place in the new church, which was less than one month old. The groom was Alfred Mayo, a 22-year old Tinman, son of Alfred Mayo, winemercant, of Wollongong. Eliza gave her occupation as Dressmaker. The official witnesses to the ceremony were William Organ (Eliza's brother ?) and George Hewlett, Wollongong postmaster and E.S. & A.C. Bank agent at that time.

This new member of the family, namely Alfred Mayo, was a keen cricketer and was an inaugural member, along with James Rixon, George's son-in-law, of the Illawarra Cricket Club which formed early in 1857. The Illawarra Cricket Club's first match, between its married and single members, was described in the Illawarra Mercury of 16th March, 1857.

In December of 1857 a subscription list was set up for a new church to be erected on Church Hill, Wollongong. This was to be St Michael's Church of England in Market Street and was to replace the old barn which had been used since the late 1830s as a church and schoolhouse. By the end of December the list, as published in the Mercury, totalled £1244.3.6 of which William Organ had given £2.2.0, Elias had given £1.1.0, George £4.4.0, Thomas Cleverdon £1.1.0 and John Buckland £1.1.0. The new church was eventually built and consecrated on 15 December 1859.

#### 1858: Busy Times

This was a busy year for both William and George Organ and their respective families, judging by surviving records. The only additions to the family during 1858 were a daughter and a grandson to William. On the 23rd March, his wife Mary Ann gave birth to a daughter, named Mary Emmaline, at Crown Street, Wollongong. She was to be William and Mary Ann's final child - altogether they had 10 children between 1841 and 1858, of which 8 survived birth. William was 47 at the time of Mary Emmaline's birth and Mary Ann was 34. During those eighteen years of marriage she had ten pregnancies that we know of - such was life!

While William's wife was bearing her final child, his daughter Elizabeth was bearing her first, for on the 29th June, Alfred and

Eliza Mayo became proud parents to a son, whom they named Alfred, born at Wollongong and the first of ten children for the couple.

On the 22nd February an advertisement appeared in the Mercury for the "Wollongong Boot and Shoe Warehouse, Opposite the National School" now operated by M. Murray - it seems as though William was no longer running this business but in fact had moved to some other shop in Crown Street or was possibly working with Michael Murray. We know this because William's name was among those 114 householders of Wollongong who signed a petition, dated 19th November, 1858, calling for Wollongong to be declared a Municipality. This petition was published in the Illawarra Mercury of 25th November 1858, and is quite revealing as besides the names of the various householders it includes their occupation and place of residence. Some of the names contained therein include:

William Organ, Crown Street, Bootmaker  
George Organ, Barella Street, Builder  
James Rixon, Corrimal Street, Contractor

Including William Organ, there were 9 boot and shoemakers residing in Wollongong at that time - all except one in Crown Street!

#### WOLLONGONG MUNICIPAL INSTITUTION PETITION

ILLAWARRA MERCURY 25 NOVEMBER 1858

#### SIGNATORIES:

ACKLIN, Christopher	Barella Street	Saddler
AHERN, William	Market Square	Blacksmith
ALLEN, John	Garden Hill	Carter
ALLEN, J.	Crown Street	Tanner
BARTELL, Thomas	Coomb Street	Wheelwright
BEATTIE, John	Crown Street	Carter
BEAVIS, Robert	Wollongong	Builder
BIGGAR, John	Corrimal Street	Storekeeper
BLAKELY, George	Crown Street	Butcher
BLOOMFIELD, H.	Wollongong	Builder
BONNYMAN, Alexander	Crown Street	Carpenter
BRIGHT, John	Crown Street	Draper
BROUGH, James	Crown Street	Carpenter
BROWN, John	Crown Street	Builder
BROWNE, J.C.	Market Street	Teacher
BUCKLEY, John	Crown Street	Bootmaker
BURGESS, Christopher	Corrimal Street	Laborer
BURRELL, James	Crown Street	Bricklayer
BUTLER, John	Barella Street	Laborer
BUTTERFIELD, Edward	Wollongong	Teacher
CAMP, G.H.	Crown Street	Wheelwright
CASEY, Michael	Crown Street	Baker
CAVELL, James	Corrimal Street	Baker
CHARTER, George	Wollongong	Congregational Minister
CLARKE, Jabez Jones	Wollongong	Teacher

CLINGHAM, George	Smith Street	Drayman
COLLIE, John	Market Square	Auctioneer
CONNOR, Thomas	Crown Street	Shoemaker
COOPER, George	Crown Street	Fireman
COPAS, John	Crown Street	Coach Proprietor
CORBY, James	Wollongong	Storekeeper
COSGROVE, James	Kiera Vale	Farmer
CROFT, John	Barella Street	Bricklayer
CROFT, William	Crown Street	Tailor
CROMACK, Richard	Barella Street	Carpenter
CUTCHER, Samuel	Crown Street	Shoemaker
DARE, A.	Crown Street	Storekeeper
DAVIS, William	Wollongong	Innkeeper
DOWNIE, Andrew	Crown Street	Blacksmith
ELLIOTT, Edward	Crown Street	Hotelkeeper
EWING, T.C.	Wollongong	Clerk
FLANAGAN, John	Barella Street	Carpenter
FRAZER, James	Crown Street	Cabinetmaker
FUNNELL, Joseph	Market Street	Carpenter
GAGE, Christopher	Coombe Street	Plasterer
GALVIN, Thomas	Coombe Street	Plasterer
GARRETT, John	Wollongong	Newspaper Proprietor
GARRETT, J.S.	Market Street	Painter
GARRETT, Thomas	Market Street	Newspaper Proprietor
HALL, George	Church Street	Cattle-Dealer
HARDY, C.L.	Kembla Street	Printer
HARMER, James	Coombe Street	Joiner
HART, Thomas Frederick	Wollongong	Gentleman
HAWORTH, Robert	Crown Street	Tanner
HAYLES, R.T.	Crown Street	Spirit-Merchant
HAYLES, William	Crown Street	Storekeeper
HERD, Andrew	Corrimal Street	Painter, etc.
HETHERINGTON, James	Crown Street	Innkeeper
HEWLETT, George	Wollongong	Storekeeper
HEWLETT, William	Wollongong	Storekeeper
HOWITT, Adam	Corrimal Street	Storekeeper
ILETT, Charles	Barella Street	Stonemason
JOHNSON, Edward	Wollongong	Hotelkeeper
KELLY, Thomas	Corrimal Street	Carman
KENNEDY, Hugh	Crown Street	Bootmaker
KIERNAN, James	Market Street	Coal-Trimmer
LAMBERT, George P.	Smith Street	Surgeon
LOTT, Stephen D.	Wollongong	Flourmills
LOVETT, John	Wollongong	Innkeeper
LYNCH, James	Market Street	Coal-Trimmer
MacDONNELL, John	Wollongong	Storekeeper
M'ARA, Neil	Crown Street	Builder
MARKHAM, Henry	Dapto Road	Farmer
MARSHALL, George M.D.	Mount Pleasant	Medical Practitioner
MARTIN, Westley	Crown Street	Haircutter
MAY, William	Crown Street	Bootmaker
McKENZIE, Michael	Crown Street	Freeholder
MORAN, Michael	Barella Street	Carter
MURPHY, Michael	Crown Street	Storekeeper
MURRAY, Michael	Crown Street	Bootmaker
ORGAN, George	Barella Street	Builder
ORGAN, William	Crown Street	Bootmaker
ORPHAN, James	Crown Street	Builder

OSBORNE, George	Crown Street	Builder
OSBORNE, Robert	Crown Street	Builder
OSBORNE, William	Crown Street	Builder
OWEN, Robert H.	Wollongong	Gentleman
OWEN, Robert	Harbour Street	Solicitor
PALMER, David	Crown Street	Bootmaker
PARKER, J.R.	Wollongong	Chemist and Druggist
PAYNE, John	Wollongong	Wheelwright
PINCHIN, George	Coomb Street	Plasterer
RIXON, James	Corrimal Street	Contractor
ROBSON, William	Dapto Road	Miner
ROGERS, S.S.	Wollongong	Solicitor
RYAN, John	Barella Street	Carpenter
SCURR, William	Crown Street	Tin Plate Worker
SHAW, Samuel	Crown Street	Tin Plate Worker
SMITH, Charles Throsby	Wollongong	J.P.
SPERLING, J.M.	Crown Street	Solicitor
STUMBLES, Mercy	Garden Hill	Tailor
THROWER, T.	Crown Street	Bootmaker
TOSI, Anthony	Crown Street	Tailor
TURNER, Alfred A.	Wollongong Clerk of	Petty Sessions Court
WARING, George	Wollongong	Gentleman
WATKINS, James	Wollongong	Wesleyan Minister
WHITE, Daniel	Crown Street	Plasterer
WILLIAMS, John	Corrimal Street	Gentleman
WILMOT, John	Crown Street	Watchmaker
WILSHIRE, John Wood	Wollongong	Gentleman
WOLLARD, W.H.	Dapto Road	Farmer
WYNN, William Watkin	Church Street	Laborer

Whether William Organ was an employer or employee is not known, but the fact that he had been a resident of Wollongong since 1839 must have enhanced his business. Also remember that at this point in time (November 1858) William had a wife and eight children to support. Perhaps he had sold out his "Boot and Shoe Warehouse" business to Michael Murray to help support his large family - we can only speculate upon his circumstances at that time.

The appearance on the petition of "George Organ, Builder, Barella Street" is quite revealing. Up until this instant George had always referred to himself as a Farmer of Fairy Meadow or Wollongong, and never as a Builder, though his frequent involvement in land dealings had suggested such an occupation. By naming his residence as Barella Street we can identify where George and his family had been living since he sold his farm at Towradgi and came to live in Wollongong in 1855. It is obvious that they were living in the house once owned (or leased) by Elias Organ but purchased by George in 1843. This was in the vicinity of the eastern side of the NRMA building in Burelli Street and is now a council car-park.

George appears to have been very busy during 1858 mortgaging some of his land and purchasing new land. These dealings were possibly all related to a hotel which he was building on the south east corner of Crown and Corrimal Streets, Wollongong, and which was opened during December 1859. On the 9th June, 1858, George mortgaged his house in Burelli Street for £250 - on the conveyance document he calls himself a Farmer of Wollongong. Perhaps he used this money to purchase the aforementioned block of land at Crown and Corrimal Street, which he



did on the 1st November. This corner block was a choice piece of land because at that time Corrimal Street was part of the main route connecting the harbour with Crown Street and on through to the Dapto Road. Located on that corner during 1858 were Alexander and Edward Elliotts Family Hotel and the Illawarra Mercury Printing Office. (More about George's hotel later.)

George Organ's quest for cash did not end with the mortgage of his house, for on the 30th December he mortgaged another Wollongong town allotment, possibly with a house or shop upon it, for £200. The mortgages, or loans, were through a Sydney solicitor Charles Thomas as there were no such things as Building Societies in Wollongong at that time. Whether George also obtained bank loans at this stage is not known.

As I pointed out previously the introduction of an elected Government to N.S.W. in 1855 had far-reaching effects. Initially only landholders had the right to vote and at the time of elections the Illawarra Mercury would print lists of names of supporters for individual candidates. When Robert Owen Esq., the Liberal candidate and sitting member for East Camden in the Legislative Assembly had to face an election on the 19th January 1858, George Organ and James Rixon were members of his Wollongong re-election committee which met every night at the Sportman's Arms during the final week before the election. Lists of voters and their choice of candidate became quite a common occurrence in the Illawarra Mercury of the 1850s and '60s. Among those lists, and later lists for Council elections, could usually be found the names of various members of the Organ family such as George, William, Thomas and Elias Organ, James Rixon, John Buckland and Thomas Cleverdon. These lists are valuable because they place various individuals within the region at that time.

Besides election petitions other lists of names would appear upon the Mercury pages, e.g., on the 25th February a list of names, including William Organ's, was published in connection with a sympathy movement for John Hubert Plunkett Esq., Q.C., a local resident who had recently been dismissed from his position of Chairman of the Board of National Education. A substantially longer list connected with the same subject was published on the 1st April and some of the names contained therein included Elias Organ, Thomas Organ, James Rixon, Thomas Cleverdon, Alfred Mayo and John Buckland - evidently the Plunkett sympathy movement had spread right throughout the district.

We must remember that up to this time (1858) the Illawarra had no real form of local government. The District Council set up in 1843 had no real power and had died an early death. It was not until Wollongong was proclaimed a Municipality in February of 1859, following the local petition of November 1858 previously mentioned, that the region obtained the benefits of a workable local government system. Previous to February of 1859 any town improvements, road works and other public amenities such as water, night-soil removal, etc., was left up to the Government in Sydney or to the action of local residents. It was usually the latter group which bore the brunt of providing facilities for the region, two such examples occurring during 1858 being the repair and fencing of the Wollongong town lagoon, and also the repair of the streets of Wollongong. On the 29th April 1858 the Mercury carried a list of names of subscribers, and

amounts of individual subscriptions, for repairing and fencing the town lagoon. Among the £37.11.0 collected was 10/- each from William and George Organ. Water was a rare commodity in Wollongong town in the early days and it was usually upon the onus of the individual householder to secure his own supply. During the '40s and '50s water was obtained from the town lagoon at the bottom of Market Street, from individual wells or shipped in barrels from surrounding creeks such as the Mill Brook at Figtree or Garden Creek at Mount Pleasant. However as the population of Wollongong town increased during the late fifties (34% increase between 1856 and 1861) greater demands were placed on the town lagoon, resulting in the installation of a pump and post and rail fencing in April of 1858. The problem was compounded by the fact that there was a great drought during 1859-60 and the lagoon almost dried up. It was necessary during those years to purchase casks and buckets of water brought in from nearby creeks and the springs on Charles Throsby Smith's property at Bustle Hill (now Smith's Hill). Following the great drought of 1860 the new local Council introduced a licensing system for anyone who wished to use the town lagoon.

The names of William and George Organ are also contained on a "List of Subscribers to a Fund for the Repair of the Streets of Wollongong, with the Expenditure thereof" published in the Mercury on 15th September. William subscribed £1 and George 10/-.

Perhaps the most interesting family item from the Mercury files of 1858 concerns George's son William Henry who at the time was farming at Bulli on land owned by his father. On the 22nd February the following item appeared:

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COURT OF PETTY SESSIONS  
Monday, February 22, 1858  
(Before Messrs Wilshire and Davidson)

W.H. Organ made a complaint against Mrs Mark Hanks for having violently declared and threatened to knock his brains out. The plaintiff deposed that he was in bodily fear from defendants violence, and called a witness who stated that he heard the threat uttered. Mrs Hanks declared that it was Mr Organ who used threats of violence, but she did not carry any witness. Found guilty and bound over to keep the peace for six months, her husband in £10 and 2 sureties of £5 each.

---

Poor old William Henry - Mrs Hanks must have been quite a threatening character to put this 24 year old man "in bodily fear from defendants violence". William Henry was to have a rather chequered life judging from reports found in the Illawarra Mercury - he was eventually to spend some time in Parramatta Lunatic Asylum, so perhaps Mrs Hanks was telling the truth in the above case. William Henry was also a keen cricketer, playing for the Bulli Club in 1858 and '59. His brother-in-law James Rixon was also a keen cricketer and they played against each other quite often.

1858 had proven to be quite an eventful year, however the most interesting changes were just around the corner.

### 1859-60: Bad times All Round

During this period two members of the family, namely Thomas and George, moved into the hotel business in Wollongong. At the close of 1858 George and family had been living at Burelli Street while Thomas and family had been farming at Bulli. Elias and Elizabeth were still living at Figtree and Henry and his family had returned to Sydney. William was operating a boot and shoe makers store somewhere in Crown Street. 1859 was to see a number of movements, mainly by George and Thomas.

While it was to be a year of exciting change for his brothers, William Organ was to face tragedy in 1859, and again in 1860. On the 25th July, 1859, his daughter Isabella Ann died "after a short and painful illness". Isabella, William's fourth daughter, died at the age of 13 at their residence in Crown Street, Wollongong. This is the only information we have concerning William and his family during 1859.

The year mostly centres around Thomas, for on the 8th March, he received a Publican's license for the Commercial Hotel, Crown Street, Wollongong.

### Thomas Organ at The Commercial Hotel

On the 1st March, 1859, the Illawarra Mercury reported that an application had been made at the quarterly Licensing meeting for the transfer of the license of the Commercial Hotel, on the corner of Crown and Church Streets, Wollongong, from Mrs Jane Hetherington to Mr Thomas Organ. The license was granted to Thomas a week later, on the 8th, and from that day he was the resident publican in charge of the Commercial. This seems to have been a grave step on Thomas' part for up until this time we only know him as a farmer or shephard, and not a businessman. Why did he leave his farm at Bulli to run a pub in Wollongong?

On the 11th March he sold his farm at Bulli to Henry Osborne for £900 - this was a lot of money for a 51 acre farm and implies that the land either contained a valuable farming (dairy ?) operation or some type of business, such as a store. The Commercial Hotel was owned by Robert Osborne, Henry's son. Once again we see a connection between Thomas Organ and Henry Osborne - remember that Thomas may have gone to the Yass region to work on some of Henry Osborne's properties in that area. However the connection between them was severed when Henry died on the 26th March, 15 days after buying Thomas' farm for £900. Henry Osborne had nine sons at the time of death.

It therefore appears that Thomas used this £900, or part thereof, to buy the license for the Commercial Hotel. Not long after taking over Thomas placed the following ad in the Illawarra Mercury:

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Commercial Hotel, Wollongong

MR THOMAS ORGAN respectfully intimates to the residents of the town and district of Wollongong, and adjoining districts, that he has taken those commodious, convenient, and centrally-situated premises, known as the Commercial Hotel, lately occupied by Mrs John Hetherington, and that he intends to conduct the business in such a manner as to give entire satisfaction to all those who may extend to him their patronage.

A first-rate stock of superior Wines, Spirits, Ales, and Liquers has been laid in, and the house has been thoroughly refitted in the most comfortable style, without regard to expense.

Good stable accommodation.

Every attention paid to visitors, and terms moderate.

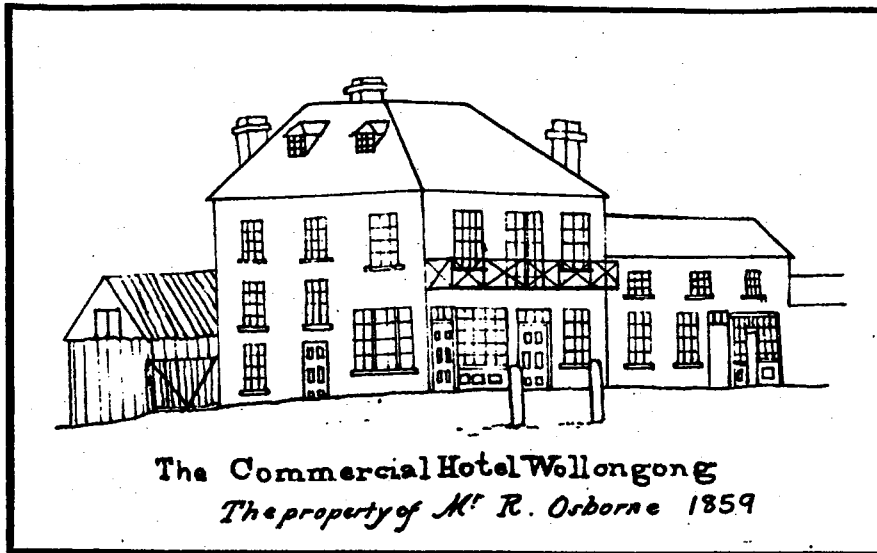
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It seems as though Thomas had cleaned up the premises and was quite enthusiastic about his new venture. Also around this time he purchased some allotments on the north-east corner of Crown and Church Street. These allotments contained three newly-built weatherboard cottages - perhaps built by George Organ and James Rixon - which were let out. Perhaps Thomas would turn into a successful businessman like his brother George. It all rested on whether he could successfully manage the hotel. Though the economy was buoyant during the late 1850s and new life was being breathed into the Illawarra with the expansion of the coal industry, 1859 was also a year of drought, which was bound to result in a shortage of cash among the farmers of the Illawarra. Undoubtedly the heat would have added to their thirsts and compensated Thomas in some way.

At the time of the Annual Licensing Meeting, held on Tuesday, 19th April, 1859, there were 16 Publicans licenses granted as follows:

1. Robert Beavis, FREEMASONS HALL HOTEL, Market Square, Wollongong
2. William Davis, HARP INN, Corrimal Street, Wollongong
3. Alexander Elliott, WOLLONGONG HOTEL, Crown and Corrimal Streets
4. George Graham, FIGTREE HOTEL, Dapto Road
5. Robert Haworth, HARP AND SHAMROCK, Upper Crown Street
6. James Hetherington, SETTLERS ARMS, Crown Street, Wollongong
7. Hugh Higgins, MT KEIRA HOTEL
8. William Lindsay, FARMERS HOTEL, Dapto Road
9. John Lovett, FIGTREE INN, Dapto Road
10. Andrew Lysaght, FAIRY MEADOW HOTEL, Fairy Meadow Road
11. Neil M'Ara, BRIGHTON HOTEL, Wollongong Harbour
12. George Beadle, CABBAGE TREE INN, Fairy Meadow Road
13. Samuel Makin, ILLAWARRA STEAM PACKET HOTEL, Corrimal Street
14. Thomas Organ, COMMERCIAL HOTEL, Crown Street
15. Margaret Scott, COTTAGE OF CONTENT, Upper Crown Street
16. Robert Woods, CHARCOAL INN, Dapto Road.

Nine of these hotels were in the town of Wollongong. Thomas was now a resident of Wollongong and seems to have quickly adjusted to town



DRAWING OF COMMERCIAL HOTEL, CORNER OF CROWN &  
CHURCH STREETS, WOLLONGONG.

**THEATRE,**  
**AT**  
**THE COMMERCIAL HOTEL.**

Thursday, July 7. 1859

**T**HE Public of Wollongong and surrounding districts are respectfully apprised that the celebrated  
**SYDNEY COMPANY,**

Including

Mr E. Holloway	Mr R. H. Cox
Mr H. Field	Mr J. Turner
Mr P. F. Anks	Mr Gallagher
Mrs R. H. Cox	Mrs Holloway

With full and efficient Orchestra,  
Will have the honor of appearing, for **THREE NIGHTS ONLY—**

**THURSDAY, 7th,**  
**SATURDAY, 9th, and**  
**MONDAY, 11th.**

**ON THURSDAY.**

Will be presented the admirable Comedy, in two acts, entitled

**PERFECTION,**  
**OR, THE LADY OF MUNSTER.**

Mr Charles Paragon, a Perfection Hunter, Mr E. HOLLOWAY,  
Sir Laurence Paragon, his Uncle, an Old Bachelor, Mr R. H. COX.

Sam, Valet to Mr Charles, Mr H. FIELD.  
Kate O'Brien, an Orphan Ward, Mrs R. H. COX.  
Susan, her Maid, Mrs HOLLOWAY.

Song—"Red, White, and Blue," Mr E. HOLLOWAY.  
Comic Song, Mr R. H. COX.

To conclude with the Screaming Farce, entitled,  
**THE ETON BOY.**

Dabster, Mr E. HOLLOWAY.  
Captain Popham, Mr R. H. COX.  
Colonel Currie, Mr H. FIELD. Servant, Mr TURNER.  
Fanny Currie, Mrs R. H. COX.  
Tom, the Eton Boy, Mrs R. H. COX.  
Sally, Mrs HOLLOWAY.

Doors open at half-past 7: the performance to commence at 8 precisely.

Prices of Admission—Front Seats, 3s; Back, 2s.

**THEATRE!!!**  
**AT**  
**THE COMMERCIAL HOTEL.**

*Last Night but One!!*

**THIS EVENING, Monday, the 11th July.**

**REDUCTION OF PRICES—Front Seats 3s, Back 2s**

**T**HE PERFORMANCES THIS EVENING will commence, by particular desire, with the third act of

**OTHELLO.**

Othello .. ..	Mr E. Holloway
Iago .. ..	Mr R. H. Cox
Desdemona .. ..	Mrs R. H. Cox
Emelia .. ..	Mrs Holloway

Comic Song (Billy Barlow) .. .. Mr R. H. Cox

To be followed by

**THE KISS IN THE FAIR.**

Old Fidget .. ..	Mr R. H. Cox
Jerry .. ..	Mr Holloway

(In which character he will appear as—Sam Wax, Private O'Rosney, Mademoiselle Duplino, and The Marine)

Susan Squall .. ..	Mrs Holloway
Polly .. ..	Mrs R. H. Cox

(In which character she will assume—Mrs Scrubbs and Mrs Maypole.

**POSITIVELY THE LAST NIGHT!!!**

To-morrow Evening.

The performances will commence with the comedy of

**THE CORK LEG:**

and conclude with the farce of

**HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS!!!**

Doors open at half-past 7: the performance to commence at 8 precisely.

ADVERTISEMENTS FROM ILLAWARRA  
MERCURY JULY 6 & JULY 11. 1859.

life. Wollongong was bristling with activity during 1859. In January of that year the Government allocated £26,892 towards Wollongong harbour improvements; a new St. Michaels Church of England was nearing completion; the new Court House and Gaol were completed; a tramway from Mt Keira to the Harbour was opened and on 29th March the elections for the first borough of Wollongong Council were held with John Garrett, the father of the editor of the Illawarra Mercury, being elected Wollongong's first Mayor. It was indeed an exciting time to be a resident of Wollongong.

Thomas played his part by introducing theatre to the Commercial Hotel. From the 7th-11th July the Sydney Company of Actors performed (see Advertisements) a number of short plays and songs, backed by a "full and efficient Orchestra". How successful the venture was is not known, however it does add to our overall picture of life in Wollongong at that time.

Just prior to this Thomas' wife Honoria gave birth to a son, named John Thomas, at the Commercial Hotel, on the 24th June. This was Thomas and Honoria's sixth surviving child.

On the 1st November Thomas gave evidence at the first Court of Quarter Sessions ever held in the Illawarra. The proceedings took place at the recently completed Courthouse building in Wollongong's Harbour Street. The case being tried was "THE FAIRY MEADOW BURNING CASE", whereby Stephen Vincent and Benjamin Rixon Jnr. (James Rixon's brother) were charged with assaulting James Campbell of Bulli. The case was reported in the Illawarra Mercury of the 3rd November and makes very interesting reading, with specific references to William and Thomas.

#### The Fairy Meadow Burning Case

Steven Vincent and Benjamin Rixon Jnr. were charged that on the night of Saturday 4th June, 1859 they maliciously, wilfully and unlawfully inflicted serious bodily harm on James Campbell of Bulli by attacking him near Andrew Lysaght's Fairy Meadow Hotel where, Campbell stated, they held him down on a burning log such that he was severely burned around the hips. Part of Campbell's testimony states:

"I went to the mill about 2 o'clock in the afternoon; then I went to [Thomas] Organ's to pay some money, and had only one glass of ale at that time; I then went to [William] Organ's, the shoemaker, and bought a pair of child's boots; then to Shaws, the tinman; then back to [Thomas] Organ's, the publican, again and had a glass of syrup. It was then about 4 or 5 o'clock. Next I went to Dr Marshall's for Physic for a child. I met [Vincent and Rixon] in Organ's the second time I was there and tossed Vincent for nobblers, after which I had a glass of syrup while Vincent and Rixon were drinking brandy and rum."

Campbell then travelled to Lysaght's hotel where he had a glass of ale and some sardines, before he returned to Thomas Organ's Commercial Hotel for the third time that day. On this third occasion he got into a quarrel with Rixon over some money which Benjamin Rixon Snr. had

held from him. "Rixon challenged me to fight at Organ's public house. We had some words." Campbell stated that it was while he was walking home from Organ's that he was attacked by Vincent and Rixon.

The case for the defence presented a very different picture however. Mr P. Owen, solicitor for Vincent and Rixon, noted that Campbell

"frequently took the pledge, and frequently broke it. At the time of the burning he was suffering from delirium, having been drinking heavily during the whole of the day and quarrelling with different people."

The first witness for the defense was Thomas Organ, publican of Wollongong, who testified as follows:

"I know James Campbell and remember the 4th June last. Campbell was at my house on that day between 1 or 2 o'clock. I served him with a glass of rum; he went away in a few minutes and returned in about half an hour more the worse for liquor than when he left. He kept drinking off and on during the whole evening. Vincent and Rixon were also at my house while Campbell was there, however they went away for 3 or 4 hours. When they returned about 9 o'clock Campbell commenced quarrelling with Rixon and he also quarrelled with 2 or 3 persons afterwards. He drew a knife on one person and threatened to stab the first man who came near him. He stuck the knife in the counter and my Mrs took it up. I am not in the habit of taking an account of what people drink, but I know Campbell did not drink ale. I had a glass of rum and syrup with him and I am quite certain he also had rum - I never saw him drink anything else. Rixon, Vincent and Lehany parted about 9.30pm in good friends with Campbell, none of them the worse for liquor. After I had put Campbell out at 10 o'clock I refused to give him a bottle of rum because he was drunk."

Following the presentation of all the evidence Mr Owen suggested that Campbell had fallen onto the fire on his way home and had been too drunk to get up before he was seriously burned. The jury agreed with this summation, for after retiring for 15 minutes they returned with a verdict of Not-Guilty for Steven Vincent and Benjamin Rixon Jnr. So endeth the first ever sitting of Wollongong's Court of Quarter Sessions.

Thomas also gets a mention in the Mercury three weeks later, on the 24th November, as follows:

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RIFLE PRACTICE - The Wollongong rifle-men are not allowing their arms to rust. They practice frequently and with very satisfactory results. On Monday, a match of three shots each, for 1 aside, came off on the beach, between Messrs James Rixon and William Osborne, members of the club, and Messrs Wright and Thomas Organ, which was won easily by the former, Organ never touching the target, whilst both Osborne and Rixon went nearer the bull's eye than Mr Wright."

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Obviously Thomas, then aged 45 years, and his partner, thought they could beat these young up-starts from the Rifle Club, but they were proven wrong.

Also around this time George's hotel on the corner of Crown and Corrimal Street was nearing completion, however this will be detailed in a forthcoming section.

While 1859 seems to have been a very good year for Thomas, 1860 was to prove the complete opposite with him losing his publican's license and being declared bankrupt on the 24th September. However the year started out on a high note when Thomas was nominated for Council by a group of Wollongong rate payers and electors (see copy of advertisement) and reported in the Illawarra Mercury on the 13th January. Obviously Thomas had made a great impression on the townsfolk during his 12 months residency at the Commercial Hotel. The petition for his support notes "your gentlemanly conduct, your integrity, sound judgement, your unparalleled business habits, and your long residence and extensive interest in the town." This was obviously the high point of Thomas' career as a publican, however his "unparalleled business habits" were questioned when on January 12 Thomas Organ was at Wollongong Court of Petty Sessions having charged John Stone, a local brickmaker, with a breach of agreement. The Illawarra Mercury reported:

"... It appears that Stone [a wonderful name for a brickmaker] made one kiln of bricks for Organ, for which he had been paid, and on the 22nd December [1859], he (Stone) entered into another agreement with Organ to make 25,000 more, and received 36s. on account. This agreement was witnessed by Thomas Moran. Stone denied having made an agreement, but handed in what purported to be a copy of a memorandum made by Organ; the difference being in the date - Organ's bearing the date, 22nd October - the other the 2nd of December, but Mr Moran swore he had signed them both at one time, on the 22nd, their Worships only looked upon it as a clerical error. They ordered Stone to complete his contract."

Why did Thomas need 25,000 bricks? Was he, like his brother George and James Rixon, involved in the building trade in some way. Perhaps the bricks were for extensions to the Commercial Hotel, or some other venture which we have no record of. However it appears that Thomas got his bricks.

January was quite an eventful month for Thomas, and on Tuesday the 21st, the day of the annual Agricultural Show at Market Square, a death occurred at the Commercial Hotel and was reported as follows in the Illawarra Mercury:

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"SUDDEN DEATH THROUGH INTEMPERANCE.-On Tuesday morning last, before the child-dropping inquiry was terminated, the town was shocked by the announcement that an old man, well known for many years past in this district as old Bill Kelly, was lying dead in an out-house of the Commercial Hotel. On the following morning a coroner's inquest was held upon the



body, when it transpired that he was found by the landlord's daughter in a shed in the back yard, in a sitting posture, but quite dead. Other evidence proved that he had been drinking about town for several days; that he had stopped at the Cottage of Content the previous night, where he had drank several glasses of ale and other liquor; that he came to the Commercial shortly after breakfast, and asked the cook for a drink of water, and went to the shed where he was afterwards found dead; and that after having the drink of water, he got Mrs Organ to serve him with a glass of ale about three-quarters of an hour before he was found by the same witness as before described. The jury returned a verdict that the deceased, William Kelly, had died from natural causes, accelerated by intemperance. The deceased was upwards of sixty years of age, and had been a long time a resident of this district, is possessed of some little property, and has several relatives in these parts."

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This incident seems to mark a turn in the affairs of Thomas Organ for after this all the news we have of him is BAD news. Whereas he had started off on such a bright note, culminating in his nomination for Council early in January 1860, something seems to have happened to Thomas whereby his business, and even his health, fell apart around him. We do not know what initiated this run of bad luck, but whatever it was took effect very quickly.

Between January and April of 1860 things went very badly for Thomas. Times were not so good throughout the Illawarra region at that time either, for when the great drought of 1859-60 broke in February 1860 the result was catastrophic floods. In 1859 there was no rain for several months during the summer and the mountains from Bulli, right away down to Shoalhaven, were burnt out. Then in February of 1860 the rain came and with it floods, especially in the region of Mullet Creek, Dapto. A Wollongong resident, Tom Gallagher, was killed in the flood while riding to Dapto. The residents soon got up a subscription list for a Flood Relief Fund, to which William, George and Thomas each contributed 10/- (List published in Mercury, 20th March).

When the time came for the annual licensing meeting, on the 20th April, 1860, Thomas was on hand to apply for a renewal of his publican's license, however, as the Illawarra Mercury reported:

"Thomas Organ's application for a licence for the Commercial Hotel was opposed by the Chief Constable, on the ground that the house was slovely kept and so as not to be any accommodation to the public. This report, the Mayor stated, was sustained by that of the magistrate who had examined the premises. Mr Organ merely stated that the house had been examined at an unseasonable time, and that he was not likely to make any very great repairs to it, considering he was at law about it. The Mayor said Organ's application would be postponed for one month, to enable him to put his house in order, and that he (Mr Organ) had had a very narrow escape of losing his licence."

Perhaps the hotel had been examined "at an unseasonable time" for it had recently been vandalised and Thomas "was at law about it". From the report of the Court of Petty Sessions, Monday April 30, published in the Illawarra Mercury, it appears that on the evening of Saturday, the 14th April, three young louts, namely James Scott, Henry Thrower and John Whelan had vandalised the Commercial Hotel, causing damage to 17 panes of glass and other items amounting to £4.10.0. They were found guilty by the Mayor, Thomas Garrett and Messrs C.T. Smith, Fairs, Waring and Stewart. It appears from the report that the three young men had been drinking at Neil M'Ara's Brighton Hotel, near the harbour, on the Saturday evening, with another man by the name of Russell Collie. Collie stated that James Scott brought 2 quart bottles of ale but Whelan drink one and ran away with the other. Collie also stated that before he left the three men at midnight he heard Whelan, who by this time was quite drunk, say "he would go and have a lark with Organ's windows". Thomas Organ in his testimony related how he was called out of bed about 12.30 am that night by Whelan, who said that his shutters had been removed and his windows broken. On examination Thomas found 17 windows broken, his shutters missing and the lamp in front of the hotel destroyed. Whelan then told Thomas that he knew where the shutters were and proceeded across the street to the Scots Church where he found them. The next day Thomas reported the incident to the police and Whelan made it known through Collie that he would pay for the damages, however Thomas took the lads to court. They were found guilty and fined £1 each plus costs and damages. A few days after this incident the Licensing Board visited the Commercial Hotel and found it in a state of disrepair, such that Thomas' license was suspended for one month. However repairs were carried out following the court case and his license was returned.

Two days later, on Wednesday 2nd May, Thomas was in the Court of Petty Sessions once more, this time along with some other Wollongong businessmen who had been handed bad cheques by a certain John Smith. On Tuesday, 17th April, Smith, who had travelled to Wollongong from Maitland to buy pigs, arrived at Thomas' hotel and stayed there for two days. When he left he had incurred a debt of £7.7.9 for board, food and grog. Mr Smith paid his bill with a cheque from the E.S. & A. Bank, however the cheque bounced and Thomas was forced, along with John Bright, a Wollongong Storekeeper, to take Smith to court. Smith was arrested on the 24th April at Shoalhaven and brought to trial at Wollongong.

Perhaps the temporary suspension of his publican's license had put Thomas in a difficult financial position, for with no license and no accommodation available to the public, his earning would have been drastically cut, making it harder to support his wife and six children. On the 19th June Thomas put up for public auction two choice allotments of land on the corner of Crown and Church Streets, opposite the Presbyterian Church and Mr Tarift's boot store. Unfortunately no records survive concerning any land which Thomas Organ owned in Crown Street at that time and we don't know how much he received for the sale of the two allotments. Whatever the amount was it appears not to have been enough to pay his ever-increasing debts, for on Monday, the 6th August, a sale of household furniture was held

at the Commercial Hotel. Were these Thomas' personal belongings or was he a mere agent for the same of the furniture? Subsequent events seem to suggest that Thomas was selling his own property in order to pay his debts. Some of the "Elegant New Furniture" offered for sale included Loo tables, dining tables, Cheffioners, chests of drawers, stuffed chairs, couches, cane chairs, wash-stands, meat safes, wire dish-covers, beds, bedsteads etc. It seems as though Thomas was selling all the new furniture he had purchased and placed in the Commercial Hotel when he took over in March of 1859.

Thomas was taken to court (Supreme Court of Sydney) late in August by George Osborne, owner of the Commercial Hotel. He was charged with an action of trespass for pulling down certain buildings, namely an old wooden humpy, which rested against the southern side of the Commercial Hotel. Thomas was found guilty by the judge His Honor Mr Justice Wise (yes, that was his real name!) and a jury of four. The final incident during Thomas Organ's time at the Commercial Hotel was reported in the Illawarra Mercury on the 4th September and involved Thomas' wife, Honoria. Apparently on the 23rd August, while Thomas was in Court at Sydney, a Mr William Fry visited the Commercial Hotel during the day. Fry had just returned from a trip to Sydney where he had visited his solicitor and had collected £116 from him. When Mr Fry arrived back in Wollongong on the Thursday morning he was apparently "the worse for liquor". Upon arriving at the Commercial he treated the people then present in the bar to a round of drinks, which he paid for in silver. Afterwards he ordered a half-pint of rum and offered to pay with a £20 note, however Honoria refused to accept the note as she knew he had silver about him. Fry did not drink the rum, but eventually left the hotel and was confronted by his wife at the top end of town. When she collected all his money she found that £20 was missing. Later that day William Clout, cook at the Commercial Hotel, and William Ryan, an aged carpenter, went to Alexander Elliott's hotel and asked him to change a £20 note. Elliott refused, so Ryan took the note to the Commercial Bank where it was changed. A week later Police Sergeant Hildebrand had Clout and Ryan arrested, charged with stealing the £20 from Fry. As there was insufficient evidence to convict, Clout and Ryan were found not guilty. Honoria Organ appeared in Court on Saturday, 1st September, to give evidence at this case. Unfortunately it was not the last time that she would see the inside of a courthouse.

For whatever reasons - whether by force or of his own free will - Thomas Organ decided to get out of the hotel business and on the 10th September his publican's license was transferred to Mr George Osborne the owner of the Commercial Hotel. Overall September was to be a very bad time for Thomas with the worse body-blow coming on the 17th when he was found guilty at the Wollongong Court of Petty Sessions of selling liquor without a license. Evidently both Thomas Organ and George Osborne thought that the official transfer of the publican's license didn't occur until the 1st October, when in actual fact the transfer became valid as of Tuesday, the 10th September. On Thursday, the 13th, the Chief Constable of Wollongong charged Thomas with selling liquor without a license - this on the very day that Thomas and his family had arranged to leave the hotel and let Mr Osborne take over. So it was that on the following Monday, 17th September, Thomas

Organ faced the local magistrates John Garrett and George Waring, J.P.s in the Court of Petty Sessions. Their verdict was that, even though Thomas may have unknowingly acted illegally, they had no discretion in the matter and were forced to inflict the fine imposed by the Act, i.e., they fined Thomas £30 with 14 days to pay. This was the straw which broke the camel's back - Thomas could not afford to pay the fine and he was without any visible means of support. Exactly one week later, on the 24th September, he declared himself bankrupt and surrendered his estate to the adjudication of the Court. In less than 9 months Thomas had gone from being nominated for the Wollongong Council to being insolvent and without any means of supporting his family.

Shortly after Thomas and family left the hotel premises, George Osborne reopened the hotel and placed an advertisement in the Illawarra Mercury of the 28th September stating that "The hotel has, at considerable expense, undergone a thorough repair, together with additions and alterations". If only we knew the true circumstances behind Thomas leaving the Commercial Hotel and the dramatic change in his fortunes during 1860.

#### Thomas Organ's Insolvency - 24th September 1860:

The details of Thomas' bankruptcy proceedings follow a similar format as those of Henry's, five years previously. On the 24th September he declared his insolvency, J.P. Mackenzie was appointed Official Assignee and the first Creditor's meeting was held in Sydney on the 25th October, at which point the following information was supplied:

#### A. Thomas Organ's Land Property and Other Assets:

- \* Thomas had purchased three allotments of land in Crown Street from H.G. Smith for £370, of which he had paid £75. Upon these allotments were erected three weatherboard cottages of two rooms each which were usually let for 4/- a week each. They were valued at £400.
- \* Household furniture, bedding and apparel of Self, Wife and Seven children. Value £50.
- \* Outstanding debts due Thoms - £14.

#### B. Creditors

Name	Debt	Amount
		£ s d
James Campbell, Wharf, Sydney	Spirits	197. 0. 0
Alexander Blake, Lawyer, Sydney	Judgement & Costs in action Organ vs. Osborne	170.16. 0
William Millford, Lawyer, Sydney	Costs of Defence	38.16. 0
W. Fahey, King Street, Sydney	Foods	45.16. 0
Michael Casey, Baker, Wollongong	Bread	21. 0. 0
John Bright, Draper, Wollongong	Drapery and Foods	11. 0. 0
John Cochran, Draper, Wollongong	Drapery	11. 0. 0

John Raffery, Butcher, Wollongong	Meat	1.12. 0
Daniel Griffin, Butcher, Wollongong	Meat	3. 5. 0
John Smith, Cabinet Maker, Sydney	Furniture	50. 0. 0
Henry Gilbert Smith, Sydney	Balance, purchase of allotments	300. 0. 0
George Hewlett, Baker, Wollongong	Bread	25. 0. 0
	Total:	<u>£874. 9. 0</u>

This meant that Thomas was in debt to the tune of £410. 9. 0. If not for the £209.12. 0 owing to the lawyers in Sydney and the fact that he allowed the hotel to run down and subsequently lost his publican's license, Thomas may have been able to remain solvent, as the other debts were mainly connected with running the hotel and could have been paid with his profits. Thomas was either very unlucky or just a bad businessman. It should perhaps also be pointed out that the number of insolvencies throughout New South Wales was very large during 1860, having jumped from 348 in 1859 to 511 in 1860. Thomas' brother William also declared bankruptcy in December 1860, so perhaps Thomas was just unlucky.

A second meeting of his Creditors was held on the 31st October, and on Friday, 23rd November, he appeared before the Chief Commissioner at the Supreme Court, Sydney, to explain his insolvency:

"I am here in pursuance of an insolvency note. I provide an account of my receipts and expenditure for the last 12 months. I have no assets whatever except what I have let forth in my Schedule. I gave up everything ... I became an insolvent because I could not pay my debts ... "

Thomas signed this testimony with an EXTREMELY shaky signature, unlike his natural flowing signature, which points to him being in either an extremely nervous or sick state at the time. Perhaps all that had happened to him in the last six months had been too much to bear and resulted in some type of nervous breakdown.

A third and final meeting of Thomas' creditors was held on the 8th April 1861 at which point a dividend of 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. in the £ was declared - not much compensation for his Creditors, but then Thomas didn't come out of it unscathed either - he lost everything, like Henry before him. Thomas and family left Wollongong some time during 1861 and at the time of the birth of his son Stephen on the 11th January 1862 they were living at Castlereigh Street, Sydney, and Thomas was working as a carpenter. Shortly thereafter, on the 18th February Thomas applied for, and received, a certificate of removal of his bankruptcy notice. He was now free to pursue a new career at the age of 47 years. Unfortunately this is the last piece of information we have concerning Thomas Organ. After his application for removal of bankruptcy was approved we don't know where he and his family went to or when and where he died. There is no death certificate available for Thomas - the only clues we have are from land conveyances which say that he died on either the 12th or 22nd August 1867. Where? How? We also know that in 1871 his wife and family were residing at Wagga Wagga. Perhaps he died on the road to Wagga Wagga - hopefully his fate will eventually be revealed.

While Thomas and his family were experiencing the ups and downs of life during the years 1859-60, the rest of the family were not just idly sitting by observing his fate - during those two years William, George and Thomas were active participants of Wollongong life. While Thomas was trying to run the Commercial Hotel, William was operating a boot store in Crown Street and George, the wealthiest and most business-wise member of the family was building his own hotel.

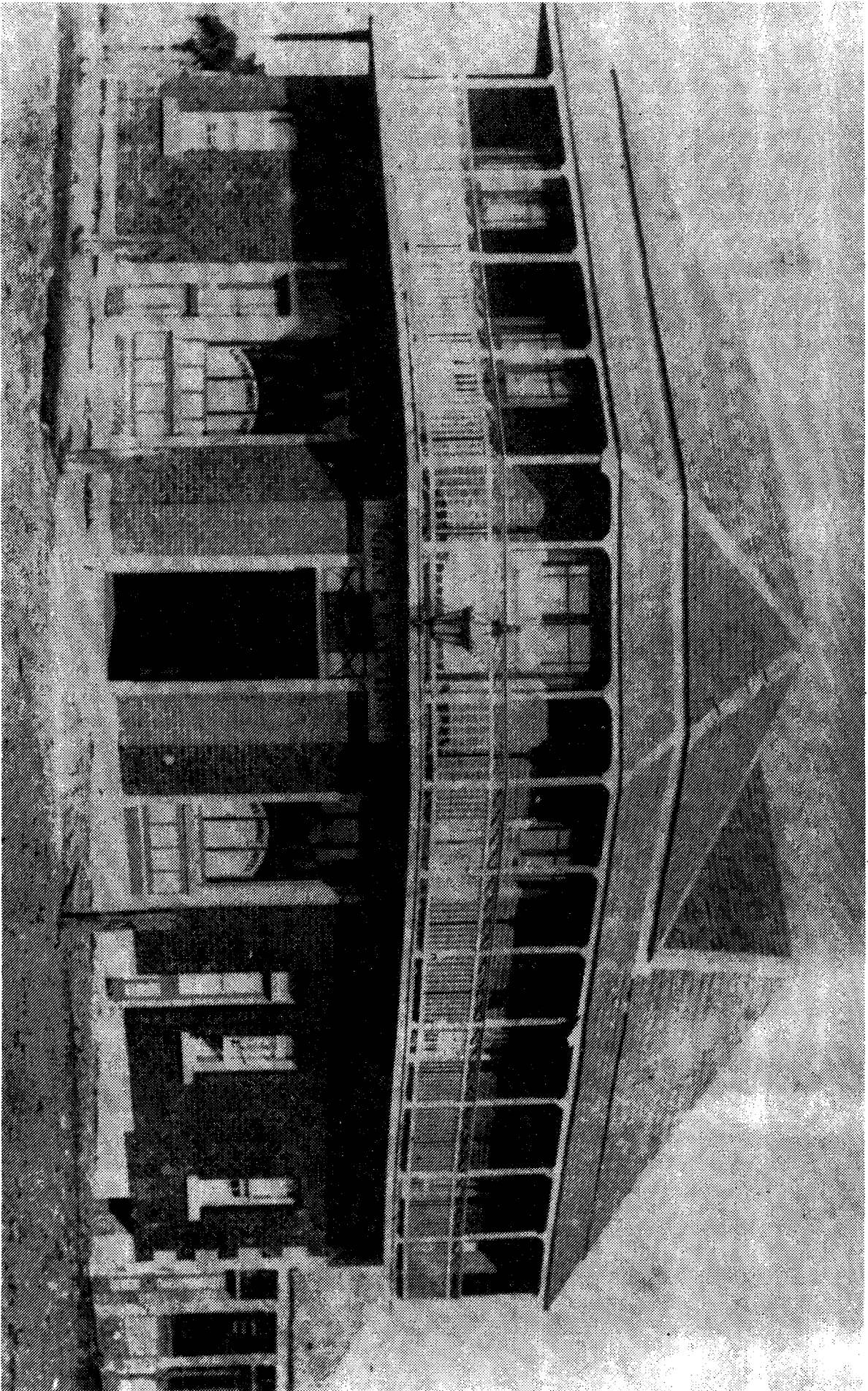
#### George Organ's Cricketers Arms:

As I already pointed out earlier, George spent time during 1858 mortgaging his properties and raising money for some unknown venture - the scope of which was revealed in the Illawarra Mercury of September 15th, 1859, when the following was noted:

"Mr G. Organ has been engaged for some time past in the erection, on ground of his own, at the corner of Corrimal and Crown Streets, or a large building intended for a public house. The walls are of brick, and from its present all-but completed state, we think it will not only have a favourable appearance, but be a comfortable and commodious hotel."

George's hotel was one of many town improvements taking place at that time, e.g., St. Michael's Church was about to be roofed, as was the new Goal; the Queens Arms hotel at Market Square was near completion, as was John Bright's new store. While the hotel was being built George and Maria were living in a house in Corrimal Street, next door to the building site. George owned two houses in this area, the other one was occupied by their daughter-in-law Ann who, on the 10th October, commenced business there as a Milliner and Dressmaker.

The Illawarra Mercury of November 24th 1859 noted that "there was an application lodged by Mr James Rixon, for a license for the house just erected at the corner of Corrimal and Crown Streets under the sign of 'THE CRICKETER'S ARMS'". The license was granted "without demur" on Saturday, 8th December and from that day on and over the next fifty years The Cricketers Arms operated as one of the better Wollongong hotels. Not much is known of the early days of the hotel because there were never any advertisements extolling its virtues placed in the Illawarra Mercury - perhaps because George saw no need to waste his money on advertising - or perhaps he placed all his ads in the Illawarra Express which began publication during 1860, but of which no copies survive. Undoubtedly the name 'Cricketers Arms' was suggested by James Rixon who was a keen cricketer in Wollongong at that time, as also was George's son William Henry. James Rixon therefore became the first publican of the Cricketers Arms on the 8th December 1859. This day was also noteworthy for the fact that at 7.30pm that Saturday evening the inaugural lecture of the Wollongong School of Arts Society was given by Reverend T.C. Ewing. George Organ, James Rixon and Alfred Mayo were all founding members of this important institution whose aim it was to help in the education of the children of the district once they left primary school. It was actually a form of secondary education. These three family members each donated three guineas to a School of Arts building fund which got under way in January of 1860. George and James were also amongst a



CRICKETERS ARMS c.1880



group of Wollongong residents who on the 3rd January, 1860, called for an increase in the funds allocated for the improvement of the harbour at Belmore Basin.

We don't hear much of George during 1860, the first year of operation of his hotel. On the 10th July the Mercury reported that George K. Waldron was offering £50 reward for the return of a black cloth poncho stolen from his saddle at the door of the Cricketers Arms on the 3rd July. George also mortgaged some more of his land on the 19th July for £350, probably to help complete the fitting out of his hotel. Apart from this we also find George's name on the Illawarra Gas Company Committee which was formed in December. Unlike Thomas, George seems to have had a quiet year during 1860 as a hotel owner. Perhaps George was observing Thomas' plight and hoping that he would not suffer the same fate.

In August George's daughter-in-law Ann left her dressmaking and millinery shop in Corrimal Street and opened "an EATING HOUSE in Crown Street, nearly opposite the Sportsmans Arms, where Tea, Coffee, Dinners and Refreshment may be obtained at any hour of the day on the most reasonable terms". Mrs Ann Organ seems to have been a very independent woman. The whereabouts and occupation of her husband William Henry are unknown at that time, but it is possible that he was farming his father's land at Bulli. Frequent reference is made to his cricketing exploits for the Bulli Club during these years.

James Rixon's license for the Cricketers Arms was renewed for twelve months on the 20th April 1860, so obviously this side of the Organ family had made a successful entry into the hotel business. With ten hotels in Wollongong town at that time it is likely that business would have been rather tough. We don't know how long James was publican of the Cricketers Arms after April 1861, for by September 1865 George Organ was the licensee and remained so until 1876 when William Simpson took over. Between 1861 and 1865 it is possible that George Organ and James Rixon carried on the business together, for it was during this period that they turned their resources to operating the Wollongong-Campbelltown mail run (see Chapter 6).

In 1876, when George was 64 years old, the licence of the Cricketers Arms was transferred to William Simpson, though George retained ownership. Other licencees over the next thirty years included:

1878-1880	John Patrick Galvin
1881-1884	William Bowman Cheadle
1885	John Roxby
1886-1894	Peter Roxby
1895	James A. Scott
1896	Edward Flannery
1897-1905	Charles Newton Hannaford
1906-1908	Peter T. Manning

The license for the Cricketers Arms expired in 1909 and the building was thereafter used for various commercial purposes until it was demolished in 1943 to make way for Dwyers used-car lot. Today that beautiful two-storey 1860's-vintage hotel is gone, replaced by a blanket of tar and cement.



While George seems to have been successful during 1859-60, his eldest brother William was in fact having a worse run than his brother Thomas. Having witnessed the death of his daughter Isabella Ann on the 25th July 1859, William was to face another death exactly one year and one week later when his beloved wife Mary Ann died on Tuesday, 31st July at Bulli. Dr George Marshall diagnosed her cause of death as a diseased uterus, a common complaint during the nineteenth century. All those pregnancies during her lifetime had taken their toll, and Mary Ann died at the relatively young age of 36 years, just like Eliza Best before her. Her death at Bulli was recorded in the journal of Reverend Watkins, kept in the Mitchell Library. Why, and with whom she was staying at Bulli is unclear, for up to this point it was thought that William and his family were living in Crown Street, Wollongong. Perhaps Mary Ann had gone to stay with one of her relatives (Alfred Parsons or William Henry Organ?) at Bulli to help recover from her illness. Alas it was all in vain and William lost his second wife, leaving him with 7 children to support. Mary Ann was buried in the Episcopalean Cemetery, Wollongong, by Reverend T.C. Ewing. She had arrived in Australia as a 16 year old bounty immigrant on board the "Bussorah Merchant" and had spent practically all of her 20 years in New South Wales as William Organ's wife, residing in Wollongong town. Her death obviously affected William who had celebrated his 50th birthday three weeks before her untimely demise. As William watched Thomas go through the pains of bankruptcy, his own position in the business community was also becoming shaky. Eventually on the 18th December he also declared himself bankrupt.

#### William Organ's Insolvency - 18th December 1860:

William's insolvency was quite unexpected - he had been in business since 1840 and during those 20 years he should have gained the valuable experience needed to operate a successful business. However perhaps the times were working against him and those 510 other insolvents of 1860. Perhaps the death of Mary Ann left him devastated. At the time of his Creditors meeting on the 11th February, 1861, William had the following Assets and Debts:

##### A. Assets

* Household furniture at Wollongong	£40
* Stock in trade, consisting of boots and shoes and implements of trade	£35
* Debts due to William Organ	£75
	<u>£150</u>

##### B. Debts

Creditor's Name	Debt	Amount
		£   s   d
Edmund Vickery, Sydney	Balance of A/c for Boots and Shoes supplied	132.18. 8

John Williams, Sydney	Boots and Shoes	54.18. 9
ES. & A. Bank, Wollongong	Cash	65. 0. 0
Dr Marshall, Wollongong	Medical Attendance	8. 0. 0
George Organ, Wollongong	Rent	30. 0. 0
Mr Caval, Wollongong	Bread	10. 0. 0
	Total	<u>£300.17. 5</u>

William's deficit amounted to £150.17. 5.

Note that William's brother George was one of the Creditors claiming money. In the insolvency documents George Organ stated that William "... is justly and truly indebted to me in the sum of £26 for 26 weeks rent from 11th June 1860 to 11th December 1860 last of a dwelling house and premises which Insolvent held as Tenant of me situated in Crown Street, Wollongong aforesaid at the rent of £52 a year payable weekly. I hold no security for the said sum of £26 or any part thereof nor has the said Insolvent set off against the said sum". When William's assets were distributed George, because he had supplied accommodation for the insolvent, by law received his full amount of £26 while William's other Creditors received a mere pittance. What kind of man was George Organ to take his brother to court for rent due - was he a cold, unscrupulous businessman, or did he realise that if he claimed for the rent he could collect some money to help his brother out? It seems as though the former was more likely. William's debts were not major and were mostly to do with his business so that if he had carried on he possibly could have worked them off. From the list it appears that William was almost destitute before his bankruptcy with only £40 worth of furniture and £35 worth of stock in trade. If we are to believe these bare facts then he had nothing much to show for his twenty years of business in Wollongong - his major asset could not be given a paper value, namely his large family, and it seems as though they would have helped their father through these difficult times. Like Henry and Thomas before him, William appears to have left Wollongong after the bankruptcy episode. The last we hear of him in town is on the 19th March 1861 when the Illawarra Mercury reported:

"NARROW ESCAPE:-As a number of youths were bathing near the rocks at Fairy Creek, one of them, a son of Mr William Organ of Crown Street [possibly Edward, aged 17, or Albert, aged 11] got into the current and was only saved from being drowned by the efforts of Finton Whelan and others. On being brought ashore, young Organ was totally unconscious, and continued so for some time, but returned to consciousness whilst being carried home."

We can say, without doubt, that William had seen better times than those he faced during 1860-61. The only other information we have concerning William during the rest of the 1860s is a mention in Sampson's 1867 Country Directory of "William Organ, Crown Street, Wollongong", though its accuracy is questionable and he may have left the area years before.

As for the rest of the family during these bleak years of 1859

and 1860. Elias on the 17th October, 1860, purchased some more land at Figtree. The land consisted of 44 acres at Brandy and Water Creek (see map3) near Figtree, and once again was a purchase of Crown Land. Elias paid £77 for the 44 acres. This land was to figure in his last Will and Testament, for in 1860 Elias was 77 years old. His neighbours at Figtree, namely John and Mary Ann Buckland, became parents for the eighth and last time when on the 29th May, 1860, Mary Ann gave birth to a son named William, in their house at Figtree, just a few yards down the road from Elias and Elizabeth's place.

#### 1861: A Marriage Breakdown

We have already seen how the first few months of 1861 were bad times for William and Thomas and nothing much was heard of them after that, however judging by Illawarra Mercury reports there were plenty of things happening within George's family during the later half of the year.

#### Bad Times for William Henry and Ann:

On the 16th August William Henry Organ's wife Ann left her husband, and on the same day he published a notice in the Illawarra Mercury disowning any of her debts. Obviously there was some friction in the family. On Monday 26th August, she took him to Wollongong Court of Petty Sessions and the case was reported in the Illawarra Mercury as follows:

"Mrs Ann Organ appeared against her husband for the purpose of obtaining an order from the Court for a separate maintenance. Mrs Organ, being sworn, deposed that she was married to defendant [William Henry Organ] on the 3rd January, 1855, but that she left her husband's roof about 10 days since owing to his threatening to do her some grievous bodily harm. She had made an application to him for a maintenance but had received no reply from him. Her husband was a small storekeeper [at Bulli] and doing a small business. He professed to own the property on which he lived, but it belonged to his father; he, however, lived rent free. She had taken a house in Corrimal Street and intended to carry on the millinery and dressmaking business. When she separated from her husband he had agreed to let her have her wearing apparel, and half the furniture, together with the millinery goods. He had also promised to let her have half the rents of the small cottages which were on the farm, the rents of which amounted to 12/- per week; and he had further promised her £5 to give her a start. He had given her £2 in part payment, but had afterwards taken the money back again as he wanted to pay for some goods that he had bought in Sydney. Mrs Organ had 3 children to support, the eldest being 5 years old and the youngest nearly 18 months [Ann was also 6 months pregnant at the time].

Elizabeth Lynch stated that she had lived with the couple at Bulli and now lived with Ann Organ in Corrimal Street. She had known unpleasantness to occur between her master and mistress on several occasions. She was present when an agreement was come to that they should separate.

Walter Duglan was called and examined by William Henry Organ. He admitted that he had seen Mr Organ shake his wife on one occasion when laboring under provocation. The provocation consisted in Mrs Organ's refusal to give Mr Organ money to purchase some things in town. The Witness on several occasions had heard cries of murder! coming from Mrs Organ, but did not know what they were caused by. When the boxes [with Ann's belongings] were brought from Bulli William Henry had protested against it.

In arriving at a decision the Bench said that the case was a painful one; as, however, the balance of testimony was in favour of the wife, they would make an order for the payment of 5/- a week for six months."

This case reveals a wealth of information about the family of William Henry Organ at that time - Ann seems to have been a very independent woman, but also William's behaviour seems to have been rather erratic and helps to explain why he was institutionalized later in life. The day after the Court case the following appeared in the Illawarra Mercury:

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TO LET

THE STORE at present occupied by W.H. ORGAN, at BULLI, with 21 ACRES OF GROUND, on reasonable terms. The WELL-SELECTED STOCK OF GENERAL STORE GOODS, at present in the Store, is also for SALE at COST PRICES.

For further particulars apply to

W.H. ORGAN, Bulli; or to  
GEO. ORGAN, Cricketers Arms, Wollongong.

---

Apparently William Henry, or Willie as he was known, wasn't prepared to run the store without his wife and family. The store was eventually leased out to the Cockerton Brothers from Sydney. Bulli was bristling with activity around this time (see Black Diamonds, W.A. Bayley) due to the opening of coal mines at Bellambi and Bulli and an influx of people hoping to work on the mines. The whole character of Wollongong's northern suburbs was to change during the 1860s from that of a rich rural setting to an urban mining community.

William Henry Organ and the Bellambi Robbery Incident:

How was William Henry feeling during this time? We can gather an impression of his state of mind from reports in the Illawarra Mercury on the 6th and 8th September concerning a case in which William Hester, alias BIG BILL, was charged with stealing two purses, two sovereigns, 3 half sovereigns, a quantity of silver and other articles from William Henry on the previous weekend.

At the Court of Petty Sessions, W.H. Organ was sworn in on the 4th September and stated that he lived in Wollongong at present and followed no occupation; but had until recently been a farmer and storekeeper at Bulli. On Saturday and Sunday last he was at Bellambi Hotel and had been drinking with the accused, William Hester. When William Henry arrived at the public-house he had between £6 and £7 in money. He had spent his money pretty freely during the day and had slept at the Bellambi Hotel on the Saturday night. When he woke up Sunday morning "he felt somewhat stupid" and did not drink much on the Sunday morning. When he left Bellambi "he was very stupid and did not know what he was about". Willie and Big Bill left the hotel together and they had not gone far before Big Bill gave William a bottle of rum, of which he drank very freely. At some point Hester struck him a blow which knocked him off his horse into the bush. William slept for the greater part of the day and upon waking found that he had been robbed and his horse, saddle and bridle was also gone. He later found the horse walking towards home and the saddle and bridle were located at Hester's house and given to him by Hester's wife. Elizabeth Allen, barmaid at the Bellambi Hotel, was called to give evidence. She swore that "on Friday evening Mr Organ had treated all the persons in the bar, and there were a good many of them. [Perhaps he was celebrating his wife leaving him.] On the Sunday morning Hester purchased a bottle of rum and he and Organ left the hotel together, Hester walking and Organ riding. They took the bush road, not the road leading by the sea beach, and the witness noted that Organ was quite sober at the time."

Due to the inconclusive evidence and W.H. Organ's state of mind at the time of the incident, William Hester was found not guilty of the charge of stealing the money, however as soon as he left the Court he was re-arrested and charged with stealing William's horse, bridle and saddle. This time in his testimony William Henry stated that "the accused offered me some rum out of a bottle, after which he asked to look at my whip, and on its being handed to him he struck me a blow which knocked me off my horse. The prisoner then dragged me a few yards off the road and poured some more liquor down my throat, which made me stupid and I went to sleep."

Once more the Court dismissed the case, reflecting somewhat badly upon William, as though he was wasting their time. Meanwhile his wife Ann re-opened her millinery and dressmaking business this time at Moores Lane, just off Crown Street, as of the 10th September.

George was in court on the 15th October, along with a group of fellow publicans of Wollongong, charged with obtaining water from the town lagoon without a license. Messrs. George Organ, W.S. Makin, Thomas Chilby, Alexander Elliott, James Cavell, Neil M'Ara and George Clinging were each 'SEVERALLY' fined £1 each and 3/6 cost. It seems as though they were protesting at having to pay for the use of water, a vital part of their business.

Late in 1861 the Cleverdons decided to leave the district and Thomas Cleverdon placed his property in the hands of George Organ to sell. Thomas, Eliza and their family travelled by bullock wagon to

Demondrille Creek, near Young, where they took up farming. On the 26th November George Organ advertised in the Mercury the sale of two of Thomas Cleverdon's properties, one of 95 acres at Mount Kembla and another of 58 acres at Mount Keira. Each property was partly cultivated and contained a cottage or other building. Whether George had purchased these farms from Thomas, or was merely acting as his agent is not known.

The year ended with numerous reports on W.H. Organ and the various games his Bellambi cricket club was involved in. Whatever his failings, Willie seems to have been an accomplished cricketer, playing many games in the area throughout the summer season. He, or perhaps William's son William Henry, was also involved in a tree felling competition at Bulli on the 24th December. [Remember that both George and William Organ had named their first sons William Henry and both were living in the Bulli area in 1861 so there is some confusion. However George's son seems to have moved to Wollongong, then Bellambi, after he left the store at Bulli.] The competition, to fell a tree four feet in diameter, was between Garibaldi and Juggling Billy, and took place "in the presence of several first-rate axemen, among whom we noticed Messrs Organ, Bennett and Brooker. The competition was won by Garibaldi, the Bulli Pet, after one hours hard work."

#### 1862: Shame and Scandal

While one member of the family, namely Thomas, was declared solvent in February, another member of the family, namely George's son William Henry, was pronounced insolvent.

#### William Henry Organ's Insolvency - 20th January 1862:

Even though George had escaped the fate of his three brothers, his son was not so lucky for on 29th November 1861 he voluntarily applied to be declared insolvent, which was granted on the 20th January 1862. The details of William's insolvency are very interesting because they detail some of the workings of a storekeeper in Bulli during 1861. At the time of his declaration he presented the following information:

##### A. Assets

Bedstead and bedding, 2 chairs, kitchen utensils	£ 3. 5. 0
Wearing apparel for self, wife and children	£ 8. 0. 0
Debts due to William from his Store:	

Name	Item	Amount
		£ s d
Mr Hilder, a Sawyer, Bulli	Groceries etc	4.13. 4
Mr Madden, Farmer, Bulli	Groceries etc	1. 3. 1
Daniel Manson, Bulli	Clothing etc	1.13. 6
W. Souther, Bulli	Groceries and Cash	0. 4. 3
Mrs Carnes, Bulli	Groceries, Poultry, etc	1. 6. 3
Mr Ballantine, Bulli	Groceries	0.16. 6
Mr McMillen, Bulli	Groceries	0.15. 0
Mr R. Logen, Bulli	Groceries and Drapery	7. 4. 8
Mr Gains, Bulli	Groceries	0. 2. 6

Mr Eden, Bulli	Groceries etc	4.11. 9
John Thomas, Fairy Meadow	Groceries etc	2.18. 2
Charles Hill, Bulli	Groceries etc	0. 7. 6
Mr Gibbs, Bulli	Groceries etc	0.13.10
James Seaton, Bulli	Clothing, Seeds, etc	1. 4. 0
Mr Carrick	Balance for Draperies, Groceries etc	0. 2. 8
Augustus Robinson, Wollongong	Groceries	0. 7. 5
Jane Thompson, Wollongong	Millinery	2. 2. 6
Mr Cleverdon, Wollongong	Millinery	1.11. 3
William Smith, Wollongong	Groceries	0. 7. 0
Total		<u>£32. 5. 2</u>

### B. Creditors

Name	Item	Amount £ s d
Thomas Audsley, South Head Road, Sydney	Books and Shelves	48.12. 6
James Duffin	Groceries	30. 0. 0
John Webb, Princess St. Sydney	Balance of Account	2. 7. 1
John Bright	Groceries etc	4.18. 4
McPhillamy and Healey, Sussex St. Sydney	Groceries etc., Freight and Money Lent	2. 8. 0
Reuben Parsons, Wollongong	Hardware	18. 0. 0
J.R. Parker, Wollongong	Tobacco	1. 8. 6
Samuel Griffin, Wollongong	Meat	2.16. 0
Mr Cavell, Wollongong	Bread	1.12. 0
Mr O'Neil, King St., Sydney	Confectionary	5.16. 2
Henry Priestly, Sussex St. Sydney	Money Lent	1. 0. 0
Illawarra Mercury	Newspaper	1. 7. 0
Mr Hewlett, Wollongong	Store goods, Draperies	49. 0. 0
Mr Cregan, Braidwood	Money Lent	2.10. 0
Total:		<u>£172.15. 7</u>

This left William Henry with a deficiency of £129. 5. 5. It seems as though his wife Ann was also included in his insolvency, even though they had separated and she was carrying on a business of her own. On the 5th March William explained his insolvency to the Supreme Court as follows:

"I attribute my insolvency to being sued by a Creditor of mine, Mr Audsley, for £50 on account of goods he sold me in Wollongong. I received a verdict against me. I could not pay the verdict. Some other Creditors pressed me. I brought land in the area last August but it was sold by the time Mr Audsley reversed charges against me. I have been out of business for four months. The debts noted are debts owed to me before I went out of business. I have applied for them but cannot get them in."

William Henry signed his testimony with a cross, being his mark, indicating that he could not write - not very good for a so-called storekeeper!

The details of William Henry Organ's insolvency reveal some aspects of the running of a general store in the outlying areas of the Illawarra in 1861. William's store had a wide range of stock, including groceries, hardware, meat, tobacco, confectionery, draperies, bread, dairy products, books etc., as would be expected for a store which was the only one in the area of Bulli at that time. The store was situated on the corner of the Princes Highway and Molloy Street Bulli, however in 1861 and until this century Molloy Street was named George Street, after George Organ. Following William Henry's bankruptcy the store was taken over by the Cockerton Brothers of Wollongong who saw the potential of a store in the rapidly expanding mining village of Bulli. W.A. Bayley in Black Diamonds (1956) states that "Cockerton & Co. opened the first store in Bulli village in 1861 as a branch of their Wollongong store". However I believe that William Henry Organ's store was actually the first and may have been operating since as early as 1856. William's wife Ann (née Grover) was obviously the brains behind the running of the store and when she left him in August of 1861 the business at Bulli fell apart. It seems as though William Henry Organ did not possess the same business acumen as his father George.

On the 10th March, Elias Organ purchased one of Thomas Cleverdon's (his son-in-law) properties at Figtree for £260, and immediately mortgaged it the next day for £206.10. 0. The property was 9 acres fronting the east side of the Dapto Road at Figtree. Upon this property was a large house which had been owned by Thomas Cleverdon. However when Thomas and his family, including his wife Eliza Organ, left the Illawarra in 1861, his numerous properties were placed in the hands of George Organ as selling agent. Elias Organ, then living at Figtree on his property near the escarpment with his daughter and son-in-law, the Bucklands, saw Thomas Cleverdon's property as a good investment. A deal was made whereby he purchased the property and then immediately mortgaged it such that for the sum of £53.10.0. Elias Organ became the owner of a valuable property on the old Dapto road at Figtree. When Thomas Cleverdon died in 1864 and the family returned to the Illawarra, Elias Organ was thereby able to bequeath in his will the property back to Thomas Cleverdon's wife and family. Eliza Cleverdon (née Organ) lived in the house until her death in 1897. George Organ was also wheeling and dealing at the same time as his father, for on the 13th April 1862, he again mortgaged the Cricketers Arms for £300. Did he have some new business venture in mind?

#### Maria's Infidelity

One Tuesday, 21st August, 1862, Maria Fishlock appeared in the Wollongong Court of Petty Sessions complaining that a Mary Lehany had used threatening language towards her. Maria prayed that Mrs Lehany might be bound over to keep the peace.

Maria Fishlock was the third daughter of William Organ and Eliza Best. She had been born at the Wollongong Stockade on the 17th August 1839 and had married Michael Fishlock of Figtree on the 9th April 1855 at the tender age of 15 years and 7 months. She may have spent most of her childhood with her grandparents at Figtree for her mother, Eliza Best, had died when Maria was just six months old. At the time



of her court appearance in 1862, Maria was 23 years old and the mother of three children. From the text of the court case it appears that Maria was not happy with her lot in life, or with her husband, Michael Fishlock.

In Court, Maria testified that she was afraid Mary Lehany would carry her threats into execution as she was repeatedly in the habit of making them night and day. Mary Lehany had even threatened to take Maria's life. What had caused all this hostility on the part of Mrs Lehany? In Maria's own words

"There was jealousy existing on Mary Lehany's part on account of my intimacy with her husband, but there is no cause for such jealousy. I have never been alone in the garden with Mr Lehany, though I have been accused of it. Mr Lehany has driven me into town but Mrs Lehany was always present. I was not aware that he had driven me into town, leaving his wife to walk. I have never heard anything said about my child being christened after Mr Lehany. I have never threatened to pull Mary Lehany limb from limb nor called her an old sow. I bear no malice towards Mrs Lehany. I simply require protection from her."

Mr Jones, lawyer for Mrs Lehany, maintained that Maria had greatly provoked Mary and had caused great unhappiness for Mary Lehany and her husband.

The two judges, in the form of the Wollongong Mayor George Hewlett, and Captain Hopkins, found Mary Lehany guilty of harrassment and fined her £20, also ordering her to be of good conduct for six months. As for Maria, she may have been protected from Mrs Lehany but she wasn't protected from her husband Michael Fishlock who kicked her out and divorced her shortly thereafter. It was reported (pers. comm.) that Michael discovered Maria with another man on one occasion though whether this was before or after the Lehany incident is not known.

Maria seems to have disappeared after this scandalous affair and we don't know whether she returned home to her father William at Wollongong, whether she remarried or whether she left Wollongong. Michael Fishlock remarried and fathered nine more children. Who are we to make judgements on Maria's behaviour after so many years. This incident merely added to the trials and tribulations experienced by the family of William Organ in the early 1860's.

In Wollongong during this period there was a movement formed to build Wollongong's first hospital, in honour of Prince Albert, the recently deceased Consort of Queen Victoria. George contributed 10/- to the building fund, got up in September of 1862. George's name was also one among a number of prominent Wollongong citizens who, on the 4th July, petitioned the Mayor, George Waring, to call a meeting to discuss the building of a new post office in Wollongong. George was to show a greater interest in postal affairs in 1863.

## CHAPTER 6

1863 - 1864

### MAILMEN AND THE FIGTREE INN FIRE

#### George Organ and James Rixon - Mail Contractors

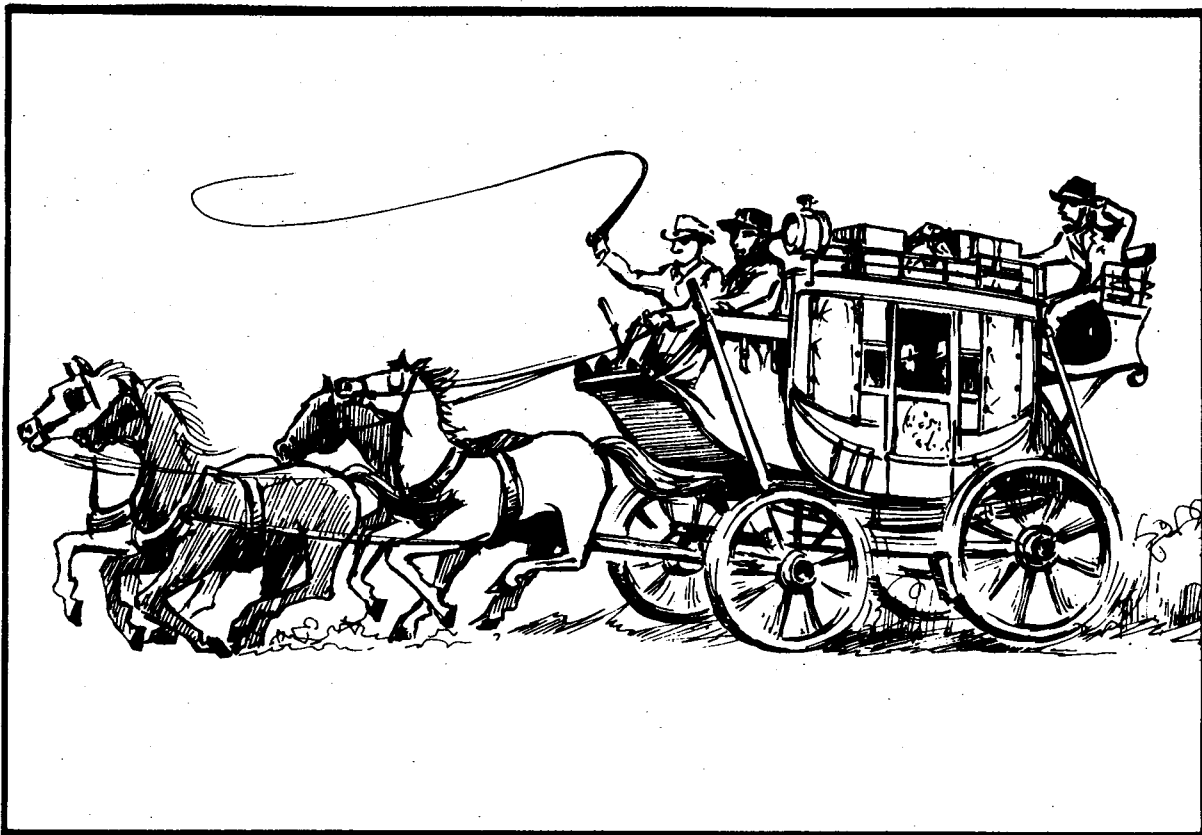
On the 28th June 1863 George turned 51 years old and three days later he, along with his son-in-law James Rixon, became the official mail contractor for the Wollongong-Campbelltown run, the most important run in the district at that time and the main means of communication between Wollongong and the outside world. It is very difficult in these modern times to realize the importance placed on the mail service by people during the 19th century. Today we have numerous means of instant communication, however prior to the introduction of telegraph, telephone and television the only means of communication available to our ancestors was by word of mouth (very unreliable!) or by letter. During the 19th century great importance was placed on safe delivery of the mail, whether it be by horseback, coach or ship. Today the mail is only one of many forms of communication and its importance has diminished from the times during last century when the mail and visiting ships were the only contact the Illawarra had with the rest of the country. George and James were taking on a major responsibility when they submitted a tender for the mail run. Their contract ran for 18 months from the 28th June 1863 to 31st December 1864 and specified that they were to carry the mail six times a week (from Sunday night to Friday night) the 42 miles between Dapto and Campbelltown, via Wollongong, Woonona and Appin, and return. For this service they received £675 per annum. What had caused George and James to enter the mail business, when they had only recently opened the Cricketers Arms? Why would they want to take on the extremely difficult and dangerous job of the Wollongong-Campbelltown mail run? Remember that in 1862 the roads up the escarpment and across the plains to Campbelltown were mere bride tracks and many creeks and streams had to be crossed.

A post office had been established at Wollongong on the 1st August 1832 and as early as 1834 the mailman was drowned on his way to Wollongong. Due to the perils of the land route the mail was sometimes carried on ships, however this also proved to be unreliable due to inclement weather and the lack of a suitable harbour at Wollongong until the late 1850s.

One of the reasons behind George's and James' entry into the mail business may have been the fact that as early as 1838 James Rixon's father, Benjamin Rixon, had been the mailman on the same run. In 1848 Ben Rixon had received £255 for carrying the mail on horseback between Wollongong and Campbelltown and also between Dapto and Shoalhaven twice a week. Prior to George and James taking over the run in June 1863, James Woods had the contract in 1861. He travelled by coach three days a week and three days on horseback. It is possible that George and James used the same system. Wollongong had seen the introduction of a new invention - the telegraph system - on the 8th August 1862. In Reminiscences of Illawarra by "Old Pioneer", 1923, it is written:

"For some years Mr George Organ carried passengers and mails over the Mt. Keira mountains, having difficulties from bush fires and bushrangers. With the settlement extending to

Fairy Meadow and Woonona a new road [Rixons Pass] was made over the mountain and the Keira mail route was abandoned. In those days the coaches went on to Woonona with the mail and returned and went up the new pass. The mail coach meant a new tie was made with the world outside and with that linking the conditions of the settlers were improved. Today the interest of waiting for a letter does not exist as it did in the old coach days. I remember how carefully the mails were handled and how carefully stowed in the boot of



the mail coach. The mail was a charge on the driver and he would go through fire and water to deliver it safe at the depot at Campbelltown. How beautiful the mail coach looked on those summer mornings sixty and seventy years ago. The coach, washed and polished during the night, and the horses - what horses, well fed and groomed, with coats sleek and shining, and the silver bits and buckles shining and glistening in the morning sun. With the mails aboard, the driver lifted the reins and the coach was away on its long trip to Campbelltown. During this period all the roads over

the passes were at times in very bad condition. The timber was very thick along the mountain roads and even in the town of Wollongong. In the winter months, during periods of very wet weather, it took a lot of courage to negotiate a coach team over the roads to Campbelltown. I have seen the coaches leaving Wollongong along Crown Street sinking deeply in the mud; six and eight beautiful horses straining and prancing under their load of passengers. As the coach passed along the Bulli road the conditions got worse at Charlesworths Hill, before entering Woonona, the coach would be up to the axle in mud. Passengers had to get out, and the passenger with light boots had a bad time. Many passengers with shoes left them behind in the mud. The Bulli mountain was also a trial to the coach driver, and as a rule in bad weather the passengers had to get out and walk up the mountain. The summer time was also not without its dangers. The bush fire was a great element of danger to Her Majesty's coach and the horses, driver and passengers. At Bulli word was generally received as to the condition of the mountain pass. Great clouds of curling smoke could be seen on the mountain top; the atmosphere at Bulli was dense and hot and no one really knew what was on and over the mountain. After sending a man on horseback up the mountain to report the condition of the Pass the coach proceeded. The heat of the bushfires intensified the heat of the summer's day; the horses sweated under the load; the driver shouted and called to the leaders; the passengers, with the side-flaps down to try and prevent the smoke from entering, gasped for the air that was wanting; and on the coach went past black and burning logs. Now and again a tree, burnt at the butt by the fierce raging fire, would go crashing into the gully, and then after much struggling by horses and driver the coach passed the fire and continued on to safety. It is any wonder that to young men like myself of seventy years ago that the driver of Her Majesty's mail coach was a hero of heroes, and as the coach pulled up at the post office, with the horses foaming from exertion and the roof of the coach burnt in places from falling tree branches, we felt that a romance surrounded the driver of the old coach days."

In 1862 the mail to Campbelltown usually went via Broughtons Pass and Mt Keira, or the rather steep Rixons Pass at Corrimal. When George and James took over the mail run on the 1st June, 1863, they had plans to operate a horse-drawn carriage along the route, however Broughtons Pass was too far out of their way after picking the mail up at Woonona, and Rixons Pass was too steep for a large carriage to ascend, and not very safe to descend. Their only alternative was Westmacotts Pass at Bulli. Since the railway had been connected to Campbelltown from Sydney in 1858, more and more Illawarra residents saw the mail coach as the best way to reach Sydney, preferable to the sea voyage which was the other alternative. Westmacotts Pass had fallen into disrepair and was not commonly used since its discovery in 1844, however in August of 1863 George and a group of Bulli settlers helped to clear the old Westmacotts Pass. The following notice appeared in the Illawarra Mercury of the 1st September:

"IMPORTANT TO TRAVELLERS - Those of your readers who visit Sydney occasionally or wish to do so, overland, can now ascend the mountain at Bulli, and save themselves the time and tedium of winding round the tortuous road known as Rixon's [Pass]. The mail contractor, Mr G. Organ, and the settlers in the neighbourhood have been engaged during the past week in clearing and forming Westmacotts Pass, so as to make it easy of ascent. The work is almost sufficiently far progressed to admit of a wheeled vehicle being taken up it. Your readers can now travel by a shorter and much more pleasant route."

From this point on Westmacotts Pass became the main thoroughfare up the escarpment for the residents of Illawarra's northern suburbs and others travelling the Wollongong-Campbelltown route. It appears that George was successful in making the Pass suitable for a coach, for on the 25th November 1863 (and until the 8th July 1864) the following advertisement appeared in the Mercury:

CONVEYANCE BETWEEN CAMPBELLTOWN AND WOLLONGONG:

RIXONS and ORGAN'S MAIL CONVEYANCE leaves Wollongong every day, Saturdays excepted, at 8 p.m., for Campbelltown, returning from Campbelltown every day, Sundays excepted, at half past six p.m.

FARES

From Wollongong to Woonona	1s 6d
From Wollongong to Appin	6s 0d
From Wollongong to Campbelltown	8s 0d

At that time James Rixon had relatives who operated an Inn at Campbelltown and which most likely acted as a depot. From this notice we can see that the coach driver had a long day - leaving Wollongong at 8 pm and driving through the night to Campbelltown via Bulli Pass and Appin; he would arrive early the next morning, unload his passengers and cargo, untether the horses and bed down till lunchtime, when he would pick up the Wollongong mail from the Sydney train, load any passengers, and head off towards Wollongong, hopefully arriving at the depot at the Cricketers Arms by 6.30 pm. Here the horses would be changed, the coach unloaded and the process would start again. The horses were kept in stables situated behind the Cricketers Arms. The mail coach ran six days a week and obviously would have kept George and James very busy during their 18 months as mail contractors. On the 7th December George once again mortgaged the Cricketers Arms, for £260, possibly to outfit the mail coach or supply more horses. During their time as mail contractors there was an active campaign started to petition the Government to build a bridge over the Loddon River. It was noted in the Mercury "that great inconvenience arises to the inhabitants of these districts by the frequent delay of the mails occasioned by the want of a bridge over the Loddon River ... The road was now travelled daily by a large number of travellers, in vehicles, on horseback and on foot; the mail and a day coach ran on the same road and there are no complaints except what were created by the

Loddon River when flooded." Perhaps this was the reason behind a story in the Mercury of May 17, 1864 complaining about George's mail coach arriving at Campbelltown too late in the morning to dispatch the mail on the Sydney train. They noted that "it is frequently half past eight and even as late as nine at night before he leaves Wollongong [for Campbelltown]". The mail was an important part of communication with the rest of the colony at that time - more so than in the present day - and as such even being an hour late in delivery time caused a public outcry. The mail coach driver was duty bound to overcome any obstacle, be it bushfire, flood or even bushrangers, to get the mail to its destination, and undoubtedly George and James faced such conditions during the period of their contract. When their contract expired on the 31st December 1864 they didn't bother to renew it and it appears that they sold up their horses and coach to the new mail contractor. George turned his hand to running his hotel full time once again.

1864 had been a hard year for the Illawarra region as a whole - once again the boom years of the late 1850s were followed by depression in the early 1860s. As the Mercury editorial noted on the 13 May, 1864:

"Illawarra, in common with the rest of the colony, is suffering from the badness of the times. What with floods and drought, [wheat] rust and rain, the low price of produce, the stagnation of the Harbour Works, and the consequent stagnation of the coal trade everything seems against us. Wollongong is half empty, and all round about there are houses and farms unoccupied. Tenants cannot pay their rents, landlords are obliged to reduce their expenditure, and workers cannot get employment. Improvements in town and country are at a standstill. Projected buildings, fencings, clearings, renovations, decorations and so forth, are all postponed indefinitely. Three years ago we were all prosperous and hopeful. Now we are all pinched and desponding."

Perhaps George and James had taken on the mail contract in order to secure an income during these hard times. Overall 1864 was not a good year for George Organ - on the 3rd March his son William Henry was found guilty of assault and fined £100 in Wollongong Court of Petty Sessions, a LOT of money for those times; on Friday, 15th April George was proceeding along Market Street with a horse and cart when he was thrown under one of the wheels, which passed over both his legs. Fortunately no bones were broken, but he sustained severe bruising; finally on the 16th August he was charged with "having neglected to keep a light burning in front of his licensed public house on the night of August 3rd". George was fined £1 plus costs.

The only other incident of note involving members of the family during 1864 occurred on 27th September when the Fig Tree Inn burnt down.

### The Fire at the Fig Tree:

In the early hours of Tuesday, 27th September 1864, the Fig Tree Hotel was totally destroyed by fire under very suspicious circumstances. The publican at the time was Mr George Osborne, the same G. Osborne who had taken over the Commercial Hotel in Wollongong when Thomas Organ had all his troubles in 1860. An inquest was held into the fire on the 16-17th October and the jury arrived at the verdict that the Fig Tree Hotel had been "maliciously and wilfully set on fire by some person or persons unknown". An accusing finger was pointed in the direction of one George Graham, a previous publican of the Fig Tree Hotel. There was a great deal of interest throughout the district at that time concerning the circumstances of the fire as a couple of months previously there had also occurred a minor fire at the hotel. As such the Illawarra Mercury fully reported the incident and on October 26 and November 1 published a transcript of the inquest. That transcript included testimony from Elias Organ, Elizabeth Buckland, James Buckland and others, most of whom were Fig Tree residents living near the hotel, which was situated adjacent to the fig tree. From the published transcript a picture of the community living around the fig tree at that time is revealed. The whole episode makes very interesting reading, however from Elias' testimony and those of his grandchildren Elizabeth and James, we can also observe where and how Elias and Elizabeth were spending their final years. They were both 81 years old at the time of the fire. Part of Elias' testimony is as follows:

"I live near the Fig Tree. My house is 50 yards distant [on the south side?]. I was at home on Tuesday evening and went to bed at 9 o'clock. My wife and three grandchildren were in the house. The first I heard was from Mr Buckland's son [James, Elias' grandson], who awoke me, and told me the Fig Tree was on fire. I got out of bed and struck a light, it was then 1.30 a.m. On opening the door I saw the flame and thought at first it was my cottage, but on going towards it I found it was the Fig Tree Inn. When I got to the Fig Tree I saw James Maher, and Mr Lott, and afterwards several men who are at work at the bridge arrived ... When I first arrived the flames came over from the back and caught the veradah in front, the fire was running in all directions, and it was impossible to enter the house. The wind was from the south and the fire may have been burning an hour before I saw it. The impression on my mind is that the place was set on fire. I heard someone go softly past my house but the party went furiously when he reached the Fig Tree bridge ..."

From this and other testimony we can see that Elias and Elizabeth were living 50 yards from the Fig Tree on the main Dapto Road and at the time of the fire they were also taking care of three grandchildren. Elias' daughter Elizabeth and husband John Buckland and family were living just down the road.

## CHAPTER 7

1865-69A DEATH IN THE FAMILY

This period was to be a tragic time for Elias Organ's family for by the end of 1869 Elias, Elizabeth, Thomas, Henry and William's son Edward Caro Craddock, were all dead and George was the only son of Elias left in Wollongong.

1865: Lets Get Married

October was a busy month for William's family for on the 6th his eldest son William Henry, aged 33, married his 21 year old cousin Jane Parsons at Wollongong, and on the 23rd one of his other sons, 21 year old Edward Caro Craddock Organ, married Charlotte Burrows. Edward and Charlotte were married in the residence of Wollongong's Primitive Methodist Minister, William Kingdom, at Mount Keira. Edward's stated profession at the time was bootmaker, so perhaps William and his son were carrying on the business in Wollongong following William's bankruptcy in 1860.

1866: Death of Elias Organ

Almost exactly nine months after the date of their marriage Edward and Charlotte, then living at Charcoal Creek, became parents. On the 2nd August Charlotte gave birth to a daughter named Charlotte Isabella. A few weeks earlier, on the 23rd July, Henry and Sarah Organ had seen the birth of a son, named Henry, at Clarence Street, Sydney, where Henry was working as a tailor. During their 24 years of marriage Sarah had given birth to ten children, of which six had died in infancy. Henry was to be Henry and Sarah Organ's last child.

On the morning of Saturday, 24th November 1866, Elias Organ passed away at his residence at Figtree, cause of death being old age. His remains were interred on Sunday, 25th at the Church of England burial ground (now Pioneer Rest Park) next to the remains of his grand-daughter Isabella Anne. The Mercury in his obituary noted that at the time of his death Elias had 59 grand-children and 31 great-grand-children. His death certificate notes that he had eight children living and 15 deceased. As of 1984 we know of six children living, two deceased, forty grand-children and 27 great-grand-children. By any standards we could say that Elias and Elizabeth Organ had a large family both in England and Australia, remembering that some of their children remained in England in 1839.

On the 20th August 1866 Elias had made out what proved to be his last will and testament. In it he bequeathed all his "furniture, plates, glass, linen and all my other personal Estate including cattle and horses ... unto my dear wife Elizabeth Organ". He made George Organ and James Rixon the Trustees of his will. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the will is the fact that he bequeathed his 44 acre farm at Brandy and Water Creek to his wife Elizabeth, and then



upon her death to his son Thomas, and then upon Thomas' death to Thomas' children. Perhaps Thomas was the worst off of all of Elias' son and for this reason he alone is included in the will. Elias' other property, being 9 acres at Figtree and containing his house there, was divided amongst his daughter Eliza Francis, widow of Thomas Cleverdon but remarried, and also Henry Cleverdon, Eliza's son.

The death of Elias Organ marked the end of an era - at the time of his death the family had been in New South Wales for 27 years and during that time there activities had been many and varied. Elias and Elizabeth had watched as their children had attempted to make a new life for themselves in this young country. As far as we know none of the Organs returned to England though the thought must have crossed their minds frequently for during those early years Australia was very much just another English county. We can only hope that Elias was happy with his new home and died knowing that his decision to board the Bussorah Merchant way back in 1839 and bring his family out to Australia had been the right one.

#### 1867: Death of Thomas and Henry

Sampsons Country Directory for 1867 and the corresponding Post Office Directory include the following:

George Organ, Innkeeper, Crown Street Wollongong  
 William Organ, Shoemaker, Crown Street, Wollongong  
 William Henry Organ, Farmer, Woonona  
 William Organ, Labourer, Bulli

On the 25th January George Organ sold a portion of his land at Bulli to a group of citizens who hoped to build a Primitive Methodist Church on the site, and later carried this plan out. During this time George was busy operating his hotel and assorted business ventures.

While George and William were still mourning the death of their father they were hit with the news that sometime around the 12th or 22nd of August their brother Thomas had died, and not long after, on the 18th October, their other brother Henry also passed away. The circumstances of Thomas' death - when, where, how and why? - are a mystery, the aforesaid date being gleaned from statements recorded by his children twenty years later in land conveyances. No death certificate for Thomas Fisher Organ has been located - all we know is that by 1871 his wife Honoria and family were living at Wagga Wagga.

The circumstances surrounding Henry's death are better known. He died of Hydrops Abdominus (Tuberculosis) at his residence in Clarence Street Sydney at the age of 46 years. He was buried at Camperdown on the 20th October by Fr. Thomas McCarthy. His wife Sarah stayed in Sydney and lived with her daughter's family until her death in 1875.

#### 1869: End of an Era

Our story ends with a birth, a marriage, and two deaths within the family during this year.

On the 8th June Elias' daughter Eliza gave birth to a daughter named Angelina Francis at Figtree. Eliza was 45 years old at the time and the father was Emmanuel Francis, her second husband after Thomas Cleverdon (who had died on the 6th February 1864) and 16 years her junior.

On the 28th May William's son Albert Elias married Harriet Carter of Ulladulla, and it is possible that William left Wollongong around this time with his son Albert, for the 1869 Sands Directory lists William Organ as a bootmaker at Ulladulla.

The first death during 1869 was that of William's son Edward Caro Craddock Organ who died at Railway Place Sydney of Typhoid on the 16th May, leaving a wife and two daughters Charlotte Isabella and Clara Jane. Edward was only 25 years old at the time of his death.

The final episode in this tale concerns the death of Elias' wife Elizabeth at her residence at Figtree on the 1st August 1869 at the age of 86 years. Like Elias three years previously, Elizabeth died of old age and was buried on the 3rd August next to her husband at the Church of England cemetery, Wollongong. On her death certificate George recorded the details that Elizabeth had four children living - William, George, Ann and Eliza - and 18 deceased. How could any woman bear losing all those children during one lifetime? It is often stated that our ancestors are just like us, but it is easy to see that in most cases they had a much harder life than ours.

Elizabeth's death marked almost thirty years since the arrival of the family at Sydney on the 3rd September 1839. Those thirty years had seen great change throughout the colony and the Illawarra. William and Thomas had arrived at the end of the convict era and the whole family had seen the disappearance of the convicts and chain gangs and the birth of responsible government for the people of the colony. They had lived through the first signs of Australian patriotism as seen at the Eureka Stockade and they had watched their adopted home of Illawarra become one of the main agricultural regions of New South Wales. The next thirty years would bring great change throughout Australia, and especially to the Illawarra where the Black Diamonds would become the region's main asset. There would be Organs in the region to observe these changes also, and play their part in the story of the Illawarra up to the present day.

#### POSTSCRIPT:

Following the death of Elizabeth Organ in 1869 the only surviving members of Elias' family in Australia were William, George, Eliza and Mary Ann.

William lived in Milton and Ulladulla as a shoemaker and with members of his large family until he moved to Tilba Tilba with his son

Albert Elias around 1885. William Organ died at Tilba Tilba on the 27th July 1898 at the age of 88.

George Organ remained in Wollongong, living in the house he purchased in 1843 at Burelli Street and remaining an active businessman, ably assisted by his wife Maria, until his death on the 12th December 1889.

Eliza Cleverdon (Organ) married Emmanuel Francis and lived in her parents old house at Figtree until her death there on the 30th April 1897.

Mary Ann Buckland (Organ) lived with her family at American Creek, Figtree, until her death on 16th March 1891.

Thomas Organ's wife and family lived in the Wagga Wagga region after his death. Honoria eventually remarried after declaring bankruptcy (Thomas' death had left her destitute) in 1871.

Henry Organ's family remained in Sydney after his death.

The Organ family which had worked together in the Illawarra region in 1855, was by 1870 spread throughout New South Wales. Those Gloucestershire roots would soon be all but forgotten, lost forever in time.

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APPENDIX ONE: ASSORTED FAMILY GROUP CHARTS

10.                      WILLIAM HENRY ORGAN - ANN GROVER

b. 1835

m. 3.1.1855

d. 27.1.1899

ANN	ELIZA	GEORGE	HENRIETTA	JEHOIDA	ALBERT	ALICE
b. 1858	b. 1860	b. 1861	b. 1864	b. 1867	b. 1869	b. 1869

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11.                      JAMES RIXON - EMILY ORGAN

b. 31.8.1832

b. 20.6.1835

m. 10.3.1853

d. 5.11.1892

d. 12.9.1918

WILLIAM	JAMES	GEORGE	EDWIN	JOHN	THOMAS
b. 20.11.1853	b. 17.11.1854	b. 19.9.1856	b. 1858	b. 1859	b. 1860

EMILY	ANN	EDWARD	ALBERT	MAUDE	SELINA
b. 1861	b. 1863	b. 1864	b. 1869	b. 1870	b. 1873

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12.                      ALFRED MAYO - ELIZABETH ORGAN

b. 7.11.1835

b. 15.5.1837

m. 7.9.1857

d. 22.5.1907

d. 26.1.1914

ALFRED	WILLIAM HENRY	ARTHUR	EMILY	SARAH	ALBERT
b. 29.7.1858	b. 8.7.1860	b. 8.7.1862	b. 12.7.1864	b. 17.10.1866	b. 17.12.1868

FREDERICK	WALTER	SIDNEY	LILLIE
b. 2.3.1871	b. 23.5.1873	b. 16.7.1875	b. 9.4.1879

## 13. WILLIAM HENRY ORGAN - JANE PARSONS

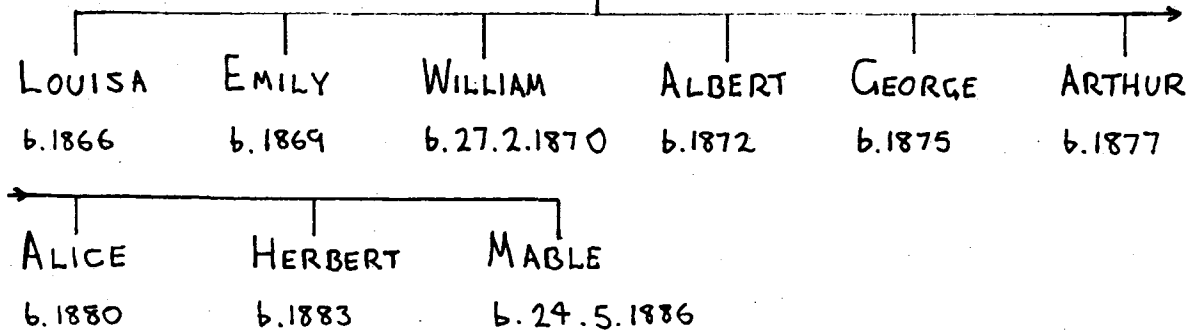
b. 5.7.1832

b. 1844

m. 6.10.1865

d. 2.9.1912

d. 2.3.1895



## 14. JOHN BENJAMIN DAVIS - SARAH EMILY ORGAN

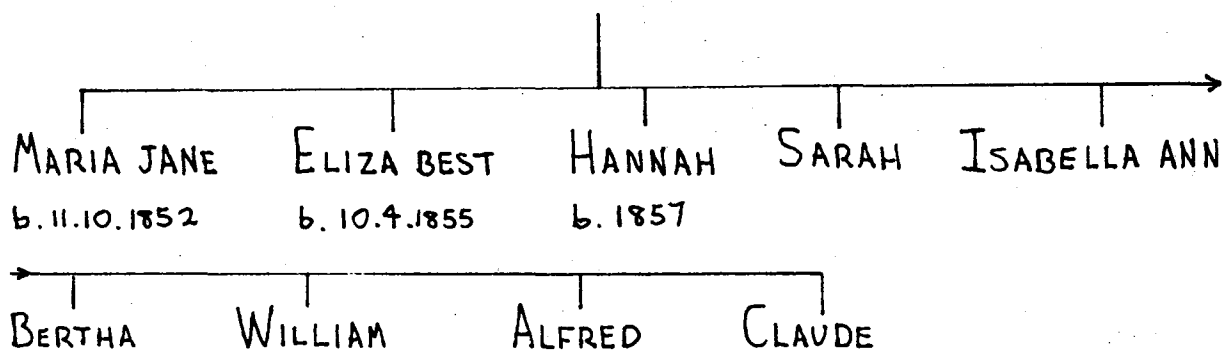
b.

b. 1.7.1834

m. 18.8.1852

d.

d. 19.7.1920



## 15. MICHAEL FISHLOCK - MARIA ORGAN

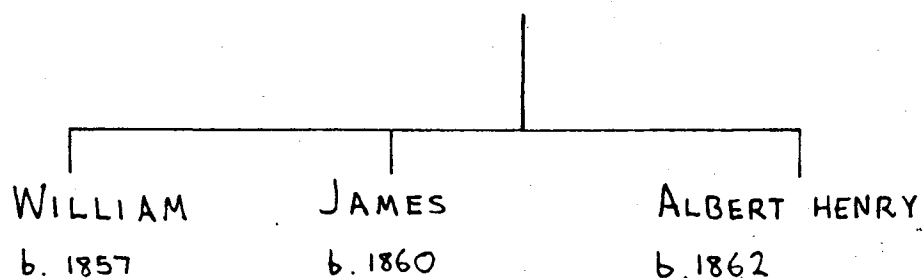
b.

b. 17.8.1839

m. 9.4.1855

d.

d.



## 16. EDWARD CARO CRADDOCK ORGAN - CHARLOTTE BURROWS

b. 27<sup>th</sup> MARCH 1844b. 9<sup>th</sup> MARCH 1845m. 23<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER 1865d. 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 1869d. 13<sup>th</sup> JULY 1923CHARLOTTE ISABELLA - <sup>JOHN</sup>HARDYb. 2<sup>nd</sup> AUGUST 1866

m. 1886

d. 7<sup>th</sup> JULY 1930CLARA JANE - <sup>ARTHUR</sup>BINDON

b. 1868

m. 1888

d. 9<sup>th</sup> JULY 1947

## 17. ALBERT ELIAS ORGAN - HARRIET CARTER

b. 26<sup>th</sup> MARCH 1849

b. 1847

m. 28<sup>th</sup> MAY 1869d. 30<sup>th</sup> MARCH 1930d. 31<sup>st</sup> JULY 1935

EVELINE MAY

b. 17<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 1876d. 1<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 1935

EDITH FLORENCE

b. 9<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 1878ARTHUR ERNEST - <sup>EDITH</sup>LATIMERb. 28<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 1880m. 25<sup>th</sup> MAY 1904d. 12<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 1943

## APPENDIX TWO

### NOTES ON THE POSSIBLE DANISH ORIGIN OF THE ORGAN NAME (REFER PAGE 7)

#### DANISH PLACE-NAMES

Before leaving the period of the Danish supremacy, there is one point of some interest, which is not free from difficulty, deserving of notice. From documentary evidence it seems as if Gloucester was only subject to Danish rule from 870 to 878, and from 1016 to 1035, nor is there any written record of any permanent Danish settlement in Gloucestershire, as was the case in East Anglia and other parts of England. How comes it, then, that we have no inconsiderable number of place names of undoubted Danish origin? In a district which lies between Cirencester and Gloucester we have Daneway,

Dane Bottom, Lypiatt, Birdlip, Wishanger, Hazelhanger, Frith, Knapp, Colthrop, Brookthorpe, and Kingsholm. In other parts of the county Danish place-names also occur, although they are not so numerous. Now, as a rule, local nomenclature is not changed unless a race speaking one language gains a permanent ascendancy over a race speaking another, and this was far from being the case in Gloucestershire. The only explanation which appears reasonable is that in some of the short intervals during which the Danes ravaged the country, they must practically have exterminated the inhabitants of certain places on the Cotswolds, which became small isolated colonies of Danes, who cared little under what government they lived so long as they were allowed to retain possession of their new homes; and that their Saxon rulers, finding them loyal subjects, did not trouble to displace them. The racial kinship which existed between the Teutons and the Scandinavians perhaps makes this hypothesis more tenable.

### APPENDIX THREE

#### NOTES ON THE FAMILY OF MARY ANNE (SPITELL) CRADDOCK, 2<sup>ND</sup> WIFE OF WILLIAM ORGAN, by ROBERT HARDY.

## Mary Anne Craddock.

When looking through the records of Cam, a village of Gloucestershire very close to Dursley, the name of Craddock is often found attached to landowners or yeoman of that district.

It is recorded in 1312 that William Craddock de Asstone supported the cause of Edward 11 and paid tallage to the king.

In 1410 Craddock of Gloucestershire is listed as landed gentry of the area of Cam.

In 1623, Robert Craddock was given the title as Lord of Newton and the family received their crest from James 1.

Edward Craddock a farmer of Cam, Gloucestershire married Mary Spitell at Cam on the 26th July 1807.

Their family was as follows:

Elizabeth	1808
John	1809
Sarah	1812
Mary	1816
Edward	1818
Samuel	1821
Ann	1823

On the 15th April, 1839 the "Bussorah Merchant" a passenger ship carrying immigrants to New South Wales left Bristol, England. Aboard on the passenger list as unmarried immigrants we find Edward, Samuel and Anne Craddock.



The passenger list tells us that the three were the children of Edward, a farmer and Mary Craddock of Gloucestershire. All were Wesleyan and could read. Ann was listed as a nursemaid, aged 16, while Edward was a farm servant and Samuel a labourer.

The story is that Anne accompanied her brothers and acted as nursemaid to young Emily, the daughter of George and Maria Organ and on arrival in Sydney on the 3rd of September, 1839 travelled with them to their home in Wollongong, leaving her brothers in Sydney.

Here in Wollongong, Anne Craddock met the family of William and Eliza Organ and when Eliza died on the 23rd February, 1840, may have stepped into the breach and cared for the infant daughters, Eliza and Maria.

On the 14th April, 1841 at the schoolhouse in Wollongong the chaplain, M.D. Meares married William Organ to Mary Anne Spittel Craddock, witnessed by George and Maria Organ. (Incidentally at this occasion Emily, the daughter of George and Maria, then aged six was baptised.)

Sadly William and Mary Anne Organ's first two children, John Humphrey born 29th August 1841 and Frederick born 2nd July, 1842 died at birth.

On the 29th March, 1844 Edward Caro Craddock Organ was born. Two years later Isabella Ann was born on the 6th May, 1846.

The family followed as:

Albert Elias born 26th March, 1848.

Clara Jane Born 9th January, 1850.

Emily Craddock born 11th October, 1851.

Sadness again as little Clara Jane died aged two years on the 5th January, 1852.

The next child was called Clara Jane and was born on the 4th September, 1853.

Humphrey George was born on the 1st May, 1856 and

Mary Emmaline on the 23rd March. 1858.

On the 25th July, 1859 Isabella Anne died suddenly from meningitis, which must have been a blow to the family, one which Mary Anne never really recovered from for on the 31st July, 1860 Mary Anne Spittal Craddock Organ died after a long and painful illness, only one year after her daughter.

Both were buried in the Old Episcopalian Cemetery, Wollongong, now called Pioneer Park.

In the journal of the Rev J. Watkins, Methodist Minister of the Wollongong-Bulli Circuit we find these statements.

July 30th, 1859. There is hope in the death of Isa Organ. She was a good girl. Though young, a member of the Society, just admitted. The funeral was a striking one, the young people of the Sunday School, all the girls in white gave a pleasing feature. I've never seen such a funeral before. The singing was sweet. The Tuesday before Isa was in her class and the next Tuesday she was buried.

August 4th, 1860. Visited Mrs Organ dying at Bulli, about a year after her daughter. She died in the night. Will preach the funeral sermon, more deserving to this woman than to many others who have this tribute paid to them.

August 20th, 1860. Preached the funeral sermon to a large congregation here at Bulli.

Mary Anne and William Organ's children numbered six that survived and today the descendants of these are numerous and are spread across the land of Australia.

